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**Carl Beck
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in Russian &
East European Studies

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False Identity and Multiple Identities in Russian History: The Mongol Empire and Ivan the Terrible

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Anatolii Fomenko, the “New Chronology,” and Russian History*

Abstract

The ludicrous reconstruction of Russian history by the Moscow mathematicians Anatolii Fomenko and Gleb Nosovskii, called the “New Chronology,” has elicited a heated response in Russia from professional historians and other scholars. Fomenko and Nosovskii’s methodology purports to be good natural science (mathematics and astronomy), but it is actually bad humanities (history and linguistics) research. Because its conclusions are worthless, the support engendered by the New Chronology among the Russian public requires explanation and sheds light on the current status of historiography and historical memory in Russia. In addition, more study is needed of the New Chronology’s relationship to Marxism, nationalism, and Eurasianism, its attitude toward religion and possible anti-Semitism.

The mathematician Anatolii Timofeevich Fomenko and the self-styled “New Chronology” (*Novaia khronologiia*) with which he is associated have proposed a radical revision not just of Russian but of world history, a revision whose dimensions can be illustrated by two of its postulates: in world history everything that is supposedly known about what happened before 1000 CE is a later invention; in Russian history the Mongol Empire had nothing to do with Mongols from Mongolia but was a Russian empire whose history was erased in the seventeenth century and later in Russia by the pro-Western Romanov dynasty and in Western Europe by the states created by revolts against it. Despite the *prima facie* ludicrousness of this schema, the New Chronology is a thriving enterprise. Fomenko and his coauthors have published dozens of books in Russian and English; the total number of pages which have appeared under Fomenko’s name as author or coauthor is probably over ten thousand. These totals do not include publications by other New Chronology advocates. Books by Fomenko and his colleague Gleb Vladimirovich Nosovskii appear in huge press runs.¹ One commentator, after noting that the New Chronology is included in some school curricula and the programs of several political parties, estimated that 30 percent of Russians are sympathetic to the New Chronology.² The New Chronology maintains a website, publishes a biannual journal, and broadcasts several television programs.³ Fomenko is a formidable element of the contemporary Russian intellectual scene.⁴

The New Chronology has rightly elicited vehement opposition from Russian historians, as well as scholars from other disciplines, because Fomenko’s theories are worthless fantasies, utterly devoid of serious value for the study of history. But his popularity in Russia has required historians there to study the New Chronology for two reasons, first, to refute its outrageous distortions of history, and second, to explain why such nonsense has achieved such a huge audience in Russia. The New Chronology has received relatively little scholarly attention outside Russia.⁵ The amount of time, energy, and publications devoted in Russia to refuting Fomenko in and of itself justifies Western interest in the polemics about the New Chronology as a feature of post-Soviet Russian historiography and culture. Unfortunately to appreciate why Russian historians become so livid at the mention of Fomenko’s name and why the popularity of the New Chronology elicits such shock in Russian academic circles it is necessary to present unadorned an extensive précis of this version of Russian history.⁶ Then we can identify the connections between the New Chronology and the elements of Russian historiography and Russian intellectual history it has cannibalized in the composition of its fractured fairy tale. We will also examine the scholarship refuting its methods and conclusions and addressing

the reasons for its popularity. Finally this essay will raise some previously unasked questions about the New Chronology for future inquiry.

Fomenko does not insist that the New Chronology originated entirely with him; in particular the contributions of Nikolai Morozov and Mikhail Postnikov are always invoked as antecedents. Nikolai Morozov was a member of the People's Will (Narodnaia volia), a nineteenth-century Russian revolutionary terrorist organization, who served twenty-five years in solitary confinement for his activities. While incarcerated he had only the Bible to read. Upon his release Morozov began publishing his view that the chronology of ancient history was significantly faulty. His method was to analyze astronomical events mentioned in classical sources. He became a hero after the October 1917 Revolution and pursued a career as a scientist. More out of respect for his biography than his scholarship he achieved membership in the Academy of Sciences. In the 1920s he published a major study of early Christianity which denied that Jesus had even existed. His books were greeted warmly by the Communist authorities because they fit very well into Soviet atheistic propaganda.⁷ Fomenko praises Morozov for his methodological use of astronomy to revise chronology, which the New Chronology adopted in toto. However, Morozov never addressed Russian history and his revised chronology, according to Fomenko, did not go far enough.⁸

Much later the Moscow State University (Moskovskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet, hereafter MGU) mathematician Mikhail Postnikov revived interest in Morozov's theories, in which he was soon joined by his colleague Fomenko. After coauthoring some articles they parted company, and in effect Fomenko took over the franchise. Before 1991 he succeeded only in publishing articles on the use of astronomy, mathematics, statistics, and probability theory in doing chronology. His massive *samizdat* monograph expounding his historical theories could not be published until after the breakup of the Soviet Union. By then Fomenko had achieved sufficient acclaim as a legitimate mathematician to be awarded the status of full academician in the Russian Academy of Sciences. The fall of the Soviet Union created publishing and cultural conditions in which the New Chronology could not only be propagated on a much wider scale but also in which conspiracy theories and esoteric knowledge found much greater resonance. With his junior colleague, another mathematician from MGU, Gleb Vladimirovich Nosovskii, Fomenko began publishing a series of monographs in large press runs which spawned a virtual movement. While some critics attribute Fomenko's turn to popularization to Nosovskii, there is no question but that Fomenko is the senior partner in the enterprise and the New Chronology is identified with his name.⁹

Fomenko and Nosovskii stake the cogency of their conclusions upon their use of the methods of natural science, first, analyzing the astronomical data in classical texts, most importantly Ptolemy's *Almagest*, and second, by using computers to conduct statistical analysis of chronicles in the light of probability theory and systems analysis. These techniques carry on Morozov's and Postnikov's approach to chronology.¹⁰ They conclude that "classical" texts in fact described astronomical phenomena which occurred during the Middle Ages. Therefore these texts could not have been written in ancient times. Indeed Fomenko and Nosovskii ascribe all classical Greek and Roman texts to Renaissance authors; the Greek and Roman classics are just Renaissance forgeries. Their quantitative analysis of numerous chronicles examine not content, whose interpretation they consider subjective, but volume, that is, word counts. When the graphs of such word counts by year for two chronicles coincide statistically Fomenko and Nosovskii conclude that one chronicle is based upon the other.¹¹ They also analyzed the chronological outlines of various dynasties such as the Moscow Riurikids and the Habsburgs. When these outlines coincide, especially in variables such as length of reign, dynastic marriages or births, and major historical events, they conclude that the earlier dynasty is just a phantom, a projection back in time of the later dynasty. Rus' history of the tenth to twelfth centuries is thus a phantom of Muscovite history from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The purpose of such dynastic duplication was of course to achieve legitimacy by creating an "ancient" virtual past.¹² Fomenko and Nosovskii insist that their reconstruction of chronology in its entirety proceeds logically and inexorably from their preliminary (natural) scientific research.

Fomenko and Nosovskii dismiss archeological dating based on carbon-14 and dendrochronology by claiming that carbon-14 is only accurate within a margin of thousands of years and that the chronology of dendrochronology derives from the old, pre-New, chronology.¹³ The birchbark letters found in Great Novgorod are dated by using the tree rings in the half-logs used to "pave" city streets to raise the level of the street to equal the rising level of the yards in housing compounds caused by garbage accumulation. Each layer of street is thus dated relatively but also absolutely by artifacts found in that layer. Since the present city known as Great Novgorod did not acquire streets paved with cement until the nineteenth century, the birchbark letters actually date from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, not the eleventh to the sixteenth century.¹⁴ For dating manuscripts Fomenko and Nosovskii reject out of hand the auxiliary historical disciplines filigranology (watermarks) and paleography (handwriting) as similarly suspect. By rejecting these techniques they preemptively impugn evidence which would contradict their new chronology. They claim that

only adherents of the New Chronology can extract the “true” history of Russia from clues left uncensored in the falsified records. In this endeavor they employ Russian sources as interpreted by their own revisionist reinterpretations. They also often invoke linguistics to identify proper names and place names as well as personal names. The “state language” of the Russia-Horde Empire was Church Slavonic, so it is permissible to examine the Russian versions of all European names. Moreover Slavonic, like Hebrew and Arabic, was written without vowels and could be written from right to left, so consonant sequences alone need to be studied. The evolution of words reflected consonant alterations in Russian linguistics and paleography. Armed with these axioms, Fomenko and Nosovskii trace Slavonic linguistic influence on West European languages.¹⁵

Fomenko and Nosovskii intend their reconstruction to replace what they call the “old,” erroneous Scaliger-Romanov chronology established by Josephus Iustus (Justus) Scaliger (1540–1609) and Dionisius (Dionysius) Petavius (1583–1652) and implemented in Russia by the Romanov dynasty.¹⁶ To describe this reconstruction of world history as revisionist is a gross understatement. Fomenko and Nosovskii claim that all traditional history before the year 1000 CE never happened—not in the ancient Near East including Egypt, not in ancient China, not in Greece, not in Rome including the Roman Empire, not the Great Migrations, not the Huns, not the Vikings. This blank time occurred globally in Europe, Asia, and Africa. What we now call the history of the world before 1000 is all a phantom invented in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Much history from 1000 to 1600 is also fictitious, consisting of duplicate phantom dynasties created for tendentious political purposes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although Christianity existed before the eleventh century, Jesus Christ lived in the eleventh century in Constantinople in the Byzantine Empire, not in Jerusalem in Palestine.¹⁷ If Jesus lived in the eleventh century, then the New Testament could not possibly date to before the eleventh century. Since the only way the Old Testament could “foresee” events in the New Testament was for the Old Testament to have been written after the New Testament, logically the Old Testament must also date to no earlier than the eleventh century. Fomenko and Nosovskii date some books of scripture to as late as the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

The Byzantine Empire included a theme (province) in “Russia.”¹⁸ (Fomenko and Nosovskii use “Russia” to describe Kievan/Kyivan Rus’). The state religion of the Byzantine Empire was Christianity. Orthodoxy and Catholicism did not become differentiated until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism also emerged. Since Rus’ converted to Christianity in the eleventh

century, it was therefore not a millennium late in joining the Christian world but one of the first countries to adopt the Christian religion. Indeed the three Magi were “Mongols,” that is Russians (Rus’, East Slavs) including St. Vladimir.¹⁹

In the fourteenth century Russians began to create the world empire which we now call the Mongol Empire. “Mongol” refers not to the people known as Mongols in Mongolia but is rather a distortion of the Greek word *megalion* meaning “Great.” The “Mongol Empire” was actually the “Great Empire.” The Great Empire comprised a civil government and a professional military. The professional military, called the Horde, consisted primarily of Russians and secondarily of Turkic peoples indigenous to the Russian steppe. The members of the Horde were all known as Cossacks. At its height the Great Empire encompassed virtually all of Asia, Europe, and North Africa, including Central Asia, Mongolia, Manchuria, China, Korea, and Japan to the east; Egypt and the Middle East to the South; virtually all of Europe including Germany, Italy, France, and England to the west. Russian rulers, the so-called Mongol khans, were buried in the pyramids in the Giza valley and at Luxor in Egypt where their names were later transformed into those of ancient Egyptian pharaohs. The individuals now presented as khans were actually Russians: Chinggis Khan was Grand Prince Iurii Danilovich, Batu (Batyī, from the Russian word *batia*, “father”), was Grand Prince Iaroslav. The so-called rulers of Europe during this time were governors of the Great Empire; their dynastic history is a later invention.²⁰

The famous battle of Kulikovo Field in which supposedly Grand Prince Dmitrii Donskoi of Moscow defeated Emir Mamai of the Golden Horde was actually a religious battle in a civil war pitting Donskoi-Tokhtamysh on behalf of apostolic Christianity against Mamai-Ivan Vasil’evich Vel’iaminov on behalf of imperial Christianity. After his victory Donskoi made apostolic Christianity the state religion of the entire Great/Mongol Empire. The battle was fought where the city of Moscow now stands.²¹ In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Great Empire expanded by sea to the New World; North and South America were colonized not by Spain and Portugal but by Cossack fleets of the Russia-Horde Empire.²² The “Ottomans” who conquered Constantinople in the fifteenth century did not originate in Asia Minor; they were *atamans*, that is, Russian Cossacks, who proceeded south to reconquer territory which had rebelled against the Great Empire. Russia colonized all of Europe. Russia ruled the world.²³

Because of its size the Great Empire, although still united, split administratively into two units, Russia and Turkey (the “Ottoman” Empire). Even so, it could not endure. In the sixteenth century Europe revolted, a revolt later portrayed in a religious guise as the Reformation, although Luther was a loyal son of the Empire and

a purely religious reformer, not a political rebel.²⁴ Areas of Europe which rejected the Reformation and remained Catholic had higher percentages of Russians in their population and remained loyal to the Empire. After their successful revolt the Europeans did not wish to admit that previously they had been ruled by Russia, so their history was rewritten, that is invented, and all sources testifying to the truth were destroyed, a process that took centuries. In Russia there was no Mongol conquest or Tatar Yoke, there were no separate Golden Horde khans. There was only the Great Empire whose capital was Kostroma.²⁵ Thus at the accession of Ivan IV, Russia and Turkey had to react to the “Reformation” revolts in Europe.

The traditional Tsar “Ivan IV” (Ivan the Terrible, 1533–1584) was not a single individual but a composite of four Ivans. Drastic changes in policy during his reign reflect not the decisions of an erratic if not clinically insane ruler but changes in ruler, later masked by subsuming them under the rubric of one “Ivan IV.”²⁶ Ivan No. 1, the first Ivan, the son of Vasilii III, ruled from 1547 to 1553. After his illness in 1553 he recovered physically but not mentally, so he abdicated and became the Holy Fool (*iurodivyi*) Vasilii Blazhennyi (the Blessed), for whom St. Basil’s Cathedral on the Kremlin square is now named, a transition facilitated by Ivan’s piety. In Greek “Vasilii” means “Basileus,” so “Vasilii Blazhennyi” just means “the blessed emperor.” The iconic Copenhagen portrait of Ivan shows that the Russians considered Ivan No. 1 a saint. This Ivan died in 1557 or in 1589; that his life span lasted so long led the Romanovs to rewrite the history of the years 1533–1584 as a single reign. Moreover, that Vasilii Blazhennyi was the abdicated former tsar explains why the official Muscovite Military Register recorded his death. Ivan No. 1 was succeeded by in 1553 by his infant son Dmitrii under the name “Ivan Vasil’evich.” Tsarevich Dmitrii could not have died in 1553 because the government after 1553 was ruled by a Regency Council called the Izbrannaia rada (Chosen Council); an adult successor would not have needed a Regency Council.

Tsarevich Dmitrii, now Ivan No. 2, ruled until 1563 when he died of natural causes at the age of thirteen.²⁷ To this point the government of Russia had remained in the hands of the Russia-Horde faction. The Livonian War was Russia’s campaign to put down the European revolt against the Empire. Although Ivan No. 2 was succeeded by his brother, Ivan Ivanovich, Ivan No. 3, the Horde lost control of Russia in a civil war, the beginning of the Time of Troubles (*Smutoe vremia*) which lasted until 1613. Ivan No. 3’s relatives, the Zakhar’in-Romanovs, came from the Pskov/Polotsk (Polatsk) region and were pro-Western. It was they who were primarily responsible for the *oprichnina* (an untranslatable term), the division of the realm from 1565 to 1572 into Ivan’s private appanage called the *oprichnina* and the remainder

of Russia, the “land” (*zemshchina*). The *oprichnina* was directed against the Russian boyars who were overwhelmingly loyal to the Horde. Western Europe, trying to weaken Russia so it would not be able to put down its revolt against the Empire, sponsored the Zakhar’ in regime. The reign of Ivan III is a phantom duplicate of the reign of Ivan IV. Consequently the story that Ivan III favored Judaizer heretics in Novgorod and Moscow at the turn of the sixteenth century actually belongs to the reign of Ivan IV. Under Ivan No. 3 (Tsarevich Ivan) and the *oprichnina* the pro-Western Romanovs permitted German Lutherans to proliferate in Russia, including in the *oprichnina* itself. The Russian church called the Lutherans “Judaizers.” Kazan’ was the Judaizers’ center, later transformed by Romanov historiography into the Jewish Khazar Kaganate supposedly of the early middle ages. The Romanovs were therefore descendants of the secret Judaizer Zakhar’ ins. The *oprichnina* printer Ivan Fedorov, Russia’s first printer known by name, was also a Judaizer.²⁸ Once in power the Romanovs terminated the Livonian War so that “Jews” supported by Western Europe could rule Russia. Previous to 1563 Ivan’s reign had not been characterized by terror. The terror phase began either on the accession of Ivan No. 3 in 1563, his abdication in 1564, or the establishment of the *oprichnina* in 1565.²⁹ The *oprichnina* sack of “Great Novgorod” was actually directed against Iaroslavl’, which with its surrounding cities was known as Novgorod. What is now called Great Novgorod had not yet been founded before 1569–1570. Therefore Ivan No. 3 sacked Iaroslavl’ and then moved “Novgorod” from the Volga to the Volkhov River. It was to the “new” Novgorod that Ivan moved his treasury, nearer the Zakhar’ in northwest homeland.³⁰

As a result of civil war, whitewashed in Romanov historiography as Mengli Girei’s burning of Moscow in 1571, Ivan No. 3 was forced to relinquish power in 1572 in favor of Simeon Bekbulatovich, probably Ivan III’s son. The anti-Romanov reaction had actually begun before 1572. Maliuta Skuratov and Vasilii Griaznoi, supposedly *oprichnina* operatives, were actually anti-*oprichnina* activists, which is why the Romanovs faced execution in the Moscow “affair” of 1572 run by Skuratov and Griaznoi. Ivan No. 3 did not formally abdicate until 1575 when Simeon was crowned, moved the capital to Tver’, and ruled until 1584 under the “throne name” Ivan Vasil’evich. Ivan No. 3, who was not held personally responsible for the *oprichnina* because of his youth, died peacefully in 1581. Ivan No. 4 (Simeon) made huge donations in memory of Ivan No. 3 not for accidentally killing him, since there was nothing to be guilty about, but so Tsarevich Ivan could atone for the atrocities of the *oprichnina* committed during his reign. Ivan No. 4 tried to resume the Livonian War but the country’s exhaustion made that impossible. He was able to move the capital back to Iaroslavl’ only briefly.

Ivan No. 4 (Simeon Bekbulatovich) was succeeded by his son, known in history as Tsar Fedor Ivanovich, whose son was Boris Godunov.³¹ Since Boris Godunov was a member of the pro-Horde faction, the European powers who had backed the Romanovs in the first place were not pleased that Russia might be strong enough to put down their rebellion. They had already instigated the Time of Troubles in 1563 which had led to the first, temporary Romanov ascendancy; now Western interference led to the permanent installation of the Romanov usurpers on the throne in 1613. The Romanovs were consistently pro-Western, so they began rewriting Russian history to erase all traces of the Russia-Horde Empire, destroying evidence which would have contradicted a virtual past in which Russia was conquered by inferior Inner Asian pagan nomad Mongols, all part of a scheme to exalt the West and denigrate Russia's history. To hide the Romanov role in the *oprichnina* the Romanovs rewrote the reign of Ivan IV as a single ruler who was responsible for the terror. In the process they vilified anyone who had opposed the Zakhar'in faction during the reign of "Ivan IV." Thus Skuratov and Griaznoi became *oprichnina* thugs, reversing their actual opposition to the *oprichnina* propagated by the Zakhar'ins.³² But the Empire had not yet completely disappeared. Remnants of the Horde survived in the Cossacks. The Razin and Pugachev revolts were attempts to restore the rightful imperial rulers. "Russian Tartary" on eighteenth-century maps was another successor state of the Empire in Siberia and Alaska, whose capital was Tobol'sk.³³

Falsifying Russian history was a complicated process. It required destroying evidence of what was, such as Ivan IV's library, which was burned and then "moved" from Aleksandrovskaya Sloboda to Alexandria in Egypt to become attributed to Alexander the Great. Falsification also required creating evidence of what never was. Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich had been told that no earlier chronicles existed on the basis of which a history of Russia could be written, yet in the late seventeenth century the Germans of Königsberg "discovered," that is, created, the Königsberg Chronicle, better known as the Radziwill Chronicle, and presented it to Peter the Great. It became the basis for all later chronicle accounts of East Slavic history from Kievan times on, including the Laurentian and Hypatian Chronicles.³⁴ The destruction of Russia's history took centuries.³⁵ Even in the nineteenth century anyone who questioned the Romanov version of Russian backwardness and inferiority was dismissed as "unprofessional," or if necessary the authentic sources they discovered were labeled forgeries. This was the fate of Aleksandr Sulakadzev.³⁶ The Romanov falsification of history was designed to enhance the pro-Western ideology and policies of the dynasty. In the eighteenth century the Romanovs relied upon imported German scholars such as Gerhard Müller (Fedor Miller) to create their new chronology.

Müller complied by doctoring Vasilii Tatishchev's "History," which was of course patriotic, such that the published version reflects Müller's, not Tatishchev's, views. By the time Russians like Nikolai Lomonosov were permitted to address Russian history it was already too late, and even the first and only volume of Lomonosov's history was published only posthumously after it had been properly "edited."³⁷ The restoration of "true" Russian history went into hiatus until Morozov, Postnikov, Fomenko, and Nosovskii revived it.

At first glance the edifice of the New Chronology seems impressively comprehensive, coherent, and consistent, a presentation of what really happened, why, when, and how it was distorted, and how it can be "restored." Fomenko and Nosovskii claim to have an answer for any and all objections. The amount of effort Fomenko and Nosovskii expended over a thirty-year period in constructing the New Chronology staggers the imagination. One wonders if they had to abandon original research in mathematics entirely to do so much historical research and write so much history. They have even visited historical sites not only inside but outside Russia. Appearances, however, can be deceptive. In fact, the New Chronology is methodologically unsound, inconsistent, and contradictory, and its version of history is contradicted by evidence its authors cavalierly dismiss or totally disregard. While their sheer creativity boggles the mind, their reconstruction has legitimately been likened to J. R. R. (John Ronald Reuel) Tolkien, which is not, and is not intended to be, flattering to authors who purport to be writing history based upon a brilliant new theory, not science fiction or science fantasy.³⁸

The reaction to the New Chronology of the Russian academic establishment, both in the institutes of the Academy of Sciences and in the universities, has been overwhelmingly negative and very frequently hostile, likening Fomenko's history to the theater of the absurd.³⁹ The above précis of the New Chronology's reconstruction of history should suffice to render such extreme emotional reactions perfectly understandable. The mildest imprecations hurled at Fomenko and Nosovskii refer to them as dilettantes⁴⁰ and amateurs, illusionists like David Copperfield,⁴¹ charlatans, or disciples of Herostratus,⁴² immoral publicity hounds, science fiction writers like H. G. Wells, Isaac Azimov, and Ray Bradbury.⁴³ Less emotional and more informative than such personal attacks is Florin Diacu's observation that under the Soviet and other Communist regimes mathematics was deemed the "queen of sciences," fostering the kind of disciplinary arrogance which would encourage Fomenko to believe that he could master any field of study he chose to the point that he understood it better than its "professional" practitioners.⁴⁴ Fomenko and Nosovskii are accused of abusing the seals of the academy of Sciences and MGU to legitimize absurd and

fantastic theories and to ascribe the imprimatur of scholarship and science onto views which are a travesty of both. That their books are sold in “History” sections of bookstores infuriates historians.⁴⁵ Popular acceptance of the New Chronology strikes professional historians as an insult and a threat. One critic describes scholars as in a state close to physical revulsion at seeing New Chronology books in bookstores alongside genuine scholarly works on history.⁴⁶ One only wishes that some of these critics exhibited clearer historical thinking in their refutations.⁴⁷

At first professional historians dismissed Fomenko and Nosovskii’s conclusions as so preposterous that it was not worth valuable scholarly research time to refute them, especially since volumes could be written correcting every page of their works.⁴⁸ Again, the above abbreviated exposition of the New Chronology’s treatment of Russian history suggests how plausible that initial response was. The pseudo-scientific publications of Fomenko and Nosovskii abounded in grievous errors, erroneous citations, manipulation of data and distortion of the scholarly works they cite.⁴⁹ Within the domain of professional history they were described as marginal and peripheral, and their conclusions were so funny that reading their prose aloud in a classroom of history students produced hysterical laughter.⁵⁰ Another critic urged readers to run from books by these dilettantes as they would from a fire.⁵¹ In Konstantin Sheiko’s pithy summary, at first “conventional” (his most frequent word for “professional,” which he uses far less often) historians could not decide whether the Fomenko and Co. were “post-modern [sic] clowns or dangerous ethno-nationalists,” although they were uniformly conceived as “an embarrassment and a potent symbol of the depths to which the Russian academy and society generally have sunk.”⁵² This hands-off attitude could not be sustained.⁵³

The popularity of Fomenko and Nosovskii compelled scholars to abandon their stance of Olympian indifference and nonchalant disdain. Especially since a December 21, 1999, conference at MGU there has been a wave anti-Fomenko publications, mostly anthologies.⁵⁴ Scholarly attention was fed by a conference at the St. Petersburg Humanities University for Trade Unions on July 25, 2001 at which Nosovskii and chess-master Garry Kasparov among others represented the New Chronology.⁵⁵ Fomenko and Nosovskii largely ignore criticism, and when they do reply, as far as their critics are concerned, they still ignore the main points of the criticism.⁵⁶ Instead they just continue to publish and mostly republish not just new editions of old books but new books which regurgitate, often verbatim, huge chunks of their old books. To give them their due Fomenko and Nosovskii have pursued additional evidence and do sometimes present new arguments. Their stubbornness galls their critics even more. It should be said that each side accuses the other of demagoguery. The critics

sometimes resort to humor, often to irony, since they are unable to keep a straight face in discussing Fomenko and Nosovskii's conclusions.⁵⁷ Fomenko reacted by pretentiously denying that humor has any place in scholarly polemic.⁵⁸

Overall it can be said that professional astronomers reject Fomenko and Nosovskii's astronomy; mathematicians their mathematics,⁵⁹ statistics, and probability theory (it astonishes mathematicians that a reputable mathematician like Fomenko would make elementary mistakes), archeologists their archeology, including their obsolete, distorted, and ignorant views on carbon-14 dating and dendrochronology⁶⁰ and unfounded denigration of paleography;⁶¹ linguists their linguistics;⁶² and of course historians their history.⁶³ It is not true as the critics sometimes assert that all professional scholars in these disciplines disagree with Fomenko and Nosovskii, but that is very close to the case. Criticism of the New Chronology may politely be categorized as devastating.

The New Chronology's allocation of praise for its predecessors and blame for putative Romanov falsifiers of history is very suspect. The claimed European proponents of "new" chronology, such as Isaac Newton, did not address Russian history and will not be discussed here.⁶⁴ Within Russian historiography extreme skepticism goes back at least to the nineteenth-century "Critical School" of Mikhail Kachenovskii, whose hostility to virtually all medieval Rus' sources would not be taken seriously today. Fomenko and Nosovskii extol their debt to Morozov but ignore the fact that before the Bolsheviks came to power Morozov's conclusions had been thoroughly discredited.⁶⁵ Calling Morozov a "terrorist" aims to deflate Soviet praise of Morozov as a revolutionary, a thoroughly unedifying *ad hominem* argument.⁶⁶ Critics refute the views of Postnikov too.⁶⁷ On the other side of the barricade professional historians dispute Fomenko and Nosovskii's insult to the scholarly objectivity of the German-born historians who dominated the Russian Academy of Sciences in the first half of the eighteenth century. Müller did not distort Tatishchev's ideas nor did Müller fabricate the archival materials he discovered in Siberia. Müller vigorously defended Russian history against Western Russophobes.⁶⁸ Lomonosov's published historical works rejected the Normanist Theory advocated by the "German" historians in Russia such as August-Ludwig Schläzer (Avgust-Liudvig Shletser); if Müller doctored Lomonosov's text to censor Lomonosov's patriotic Russian views he did a singularly inept job of it. Fomenko and Nosovskii's Russian critics do not make the point that Fomenko and Nosovskii are merely parroting the anti-German xenophobia of Soviet scholarship about the German-born historians in Imperial Russia who promulgated the Normanist theory that the first "Russian" (Rus') state in Kiev was founded by Scandinavians (Varangians); Sheiko does so very effectively to

highlight one of the continuities he sees between the New Chronology and previous Russian intellectual history.⁶⁹

Nor do Russian critics relate this excrescence of Soviet historiography to another feature of the New Chronology which also echoes Soviet cultural mythology, to wit, ludicrous claims of Russia's creative priority over Europe. For example Fomenko and Nosovskii extravagantly assert that Arabic numbers are based upon the Cyrillic alphabet and were invented if not by a Russian then at least by someone in the Great Empire who knew Russian.⁷⁰ Their reaction to the standard history of the Mongol conquest also reflects this same injured pride at the insult to Russian creative superiority.⁷¹

Critics attack Fomenko and Nosovskii's scientific methodology and its utility for historical reconstruction, accusing them, for instance, of ignorance of astronomy.⁷² Their statistical analysis of "duplicate dynasties" is based upon arbitrary and selective reinterpretation of dates to make the comparisons fit. Fomenko and Nosovskii accept as equivalent dates and numbers, let alone names, which are "close," not exactly the exactitude required of proofs in mathematics or which they impute to their conclusions. They manipulate chronology at will, equating one ruler to many (as for Ivan IV) or many rulers to one to accommodate their conclusions. Moreover they either totally ignore the biographies of the paired rulers or distort them to make them match.⁷³ Their reconstructions have nothing to do with natural science; they are devised using the techniques of the humanities. In treating the early history of the Slavs, Fomenko and Nosovskii identify the Arkaim archeological site as a "Slavic" civilization in the sixteenth or seventeenth century BCE and they accept the authenticity of the notorious forgery the "Book of Vles'."⁷⁴ This is bad scholarship in multiple disciplines.

The critics address Fomenko and Nosovskii's misunderstanding and misuse of chronicles. The Radziwill Chronicle could not have been invented in the eighteenth century since it is written on fifteenth-century paper. Textual analysis has long since proved that it is neither the oldest nor the most reliable chronicle for early Rus' history. Sheiko cleverly interprets the New Chronology assault on the Radziwill Chronicle as an attempted "knock-out blow" to the Normanist theory by impugning the authenticity of the "Tale of Bygone Years" which expounds the "summoning of the Varangians."⁷⁵ Fomenko and Nosovskii's attempt to analyze the paleography and watermarks of the Radziwill manuscripts is devoid of value.⁷⁶ Later chroniclers do not always write less, and less accurately, about the past the more distant they are from it. Later chronicles can employ previously unutilized information. Changes in literary style alone can make revised entries longer than their models, discrediting

the quantitative comparison upon which Fomenko and Nosovskii's theories rely. Fomenko and Nosovskii deny that surviving early chronicles were written on parchment; they were. In short Fomenko and Nosovskii have no appreciation whatsoever for the genre of chronicle-writing. At the same time in privileging chronicles as historical sources they ignore the enormous documentary evidence which confirms the historicity of personages and events from those chronicles which Fomenko and Nosovskii claim were phantoms.⁷⁷ When Fomenko and Nosovskii so wish, they cite any narrative material from later sources which accords with their conclusions and ignore the most elementary principles of historical source study.

According to linguists the linguistic arguments used by Fomenko and Nosovskii are worthless. Slavonic was never written right to left or without vowels. The word "Mongol" did not derive from the Greek *megalion*, nor "Batu" from the Russian *batia*, "father." "Ottoman" is not a variant of "ataman," "Vasilii" does not mean "basileus," and so on and so forth ad infinitum. There is no linguistic justification whatsoever for tracing the etymology of words in West European languages written in the Latin alphabet to the Russian language written in Cyrillic. An astonishing quantity of Fomenko and Nosovskii's reconstructions are founded exclusively on the basis of incompetent linguistics.⁷⁸

Once the validity of the "duplicate dynasties" methodology of the New Chronology, based upon perverted misuse of chronicle evidence, has been impugned, Fomenko and Nosovskii's elimination of Kievan Rus' history before and after 1000 CE loses all cogency. Restoring archeological evidence merely confirms the obvious conclusion that East Slavic history did happen before the Mongol conquest.

Critics point out that in their reconstruction of the history of the Russian-Horde Empire, Fomenko and Nosovskii rely upon Aleksei Gordeev's totally unreliable and extravagant theories about the existence of the Don Cossacks in the thirteenth century and on the most dubious assertions of Lev Nikolaevich Gumilev's studies of Rus'-steppe relations.⁷⁹ Often enough Fomenko and Nosovskii prefer to rely on textbooks, tourist guides, and popularizations, but even when reading reliable historical monographs they cite only what they want to find. Gumilev denied that the Mongols "conquered" Rus' and emphasized Rus'-Tatar cooperation, so Fomenko and Nosovskii invoke his authority. Gumilev never doubted the traditional chronology nor that the Tatars were Mongols from Mongolia but Fomenko and Nosovskii ignore that part of his analysis, just as they ignore all studies and facts which contradict their assertions. Professional historians of course also accept only those conclusions from their colleagues which accord with their own, but they are conscience-bound to deal with contradictory evidence and arguments. Chinggis Khan was not Iurii

Daniilovich, Batu was not Ivan Kalita, Dmitrii Donskoi was not Tokhtamysh, and the linguistic word-games Fomenko and Nosovskii employ to substantiate that they were attest only to their linguistic ignorance. The battle of Kulikovo Field did not take place on an open plain which would only much later become the city of Moscow. Fomenko and Nosovskii's reconstruction of the battle of Kulikovo Field in particular is marred by linguistic errors, misuse of historical sources, and geographic confusion which should have been embarrassing to inhabitants of the city of Moscow.⁸⁰

Fomenko and Nosovskii's theory of the Russian Great Empire should be placed in the context of the dilemma of the Mongol conquest in Russian historiography. The Mongol conquest continues to embarrass much of educated Russian society. Defensive Russian nationalists object to "Russophobic" arguments that Russia acquired "barbarian" customs, institutions, or culture from illiterate, uncivilized nomads. For this reason most traditional Russian historiography either ignored the Mongols entirely or attributed only negative consequences to the Mongol conquest. Unbeknownst to Fomenko and Nosovskii, recent Western scholarship has shown that revising historical conceptions on Rus'-Tatar relations, reinterpreting the degree of religious animus between Russians and Tatars, and reevaluating the cultural level of the Horde do not require revision of the "traditional" chronology, and some recent research by Russians in Russia about Rus'-Tatar relations has taken a more objective approach to the problem of Mongol influence on Russia.⁸¹ In Russia, however, such reappraisals remain a minority opinion.⁸² Fomenko and Nosovskii attempt to finesse the problem of Mongols in Russian history in a much more radical fashion.

It is difficult to imagine any assertion that would more inflame "patriotic" Russian historians than Fomenko and Nosovskii's denial that the Mongol conquest and the Tatar Yoke ever existed.⁸³ "Patriotic" criticism on this issue is ironic given that on some related themes, such as the "German" domination of eighteenth-century Russian scholarship, Fomenko and Nosovskii are just as nationalistic as their critics. They declare it inconceivable that Russians would need to import weapons and armor from ignorant nomads or any foreigners. Therefore sixteenth- and seventeenth-century metal products with Arabic inscriptions were not imports but of domestic manufacture. The quotations from the Koran on them reflect the coexistence of Islam and Orthodox Christianity in the Empire and the bilingual Slavonic-Arabic society that Empire engendered.⁸⁴ Of course these metal products came not from the steppe but from Damascus and the civilized cities of Iran, and Muscovites no more let Muslim inscriptions interfere with military need in early modern Russia than warriors in Kievan Rus' worried about Latin inscriptions on imported "Frankish" swords. Suffice it to say that the chimera of a Great (Russian) Empire attests only

to the lengths to which Fomenko and Nosovskii will go to subvert the reality of the Mongol conquest. On the one hand, Russian patriots do not want to admit that Russia was conquered, but on the other they do not want to be “associated” with the Mongols either.⁸⁵

The fiction of the Great Empire anchors the New Chronology’s reconstruction of the reign of Ivan the Terrible, since in their analysis pro- and anti-Great Empire factionalism animates the political struggles of the time. They present no direct evidence that Ivan (Ivan No. 1) lost his mind in 1553 and ignore the evidence that Vasilii Blazhennyi existed before 1553 and “Vasilii” was simply a common Christian Russian name, held by many non-tsars. Their alternative date for the death of Ivan No. 1/Vasilii *Blazhennyi* in 1589 lacks any documentary basis. The Copenhagen portrait of Ivan IV dates to the seventeenth century and cannot reflect sixteenth-century Muscovite perceptions of Ivan’s piety, although to be sure authentic evidence exists to substantiate Ivan’s religious practices. To deny that Tsarevich Dmitrii died in 1553 they interpret the “Chosen Council” as a Regency Council for a minor. Much recent scholarship questions whether there ever was such a thing as the “Chosen Council” or even if the émigré Prince Andrei Kurbskii, the sole author to employ the term, meant “Chosen Council” or “chosen council,” not an institution but selected advisors. Even if such a “Chosen Council” existed institutionally rather than informally it was not a Regency Council. The date Fomenko and Nosovskii assign to Tsarevich Dmitrii’s death is created from thin air in order to explain what they want to see as a change of policy thereafter as a result of a change in ruler. Their assertion that Tsarevich Dmitrii (Ivan No. 2) and Tsarevich Dmitrii of Uglich were one and the same is as baseless as all their “dynastic duplicates.”

That Tsarevich Ivan (Ivan No. 3) came to the throne in 1563 overlooks numerous Russian and foreign sources thereafter that name Ivan IV and Tsarevich Ivan as participating in events together. A second Ivan coronation in 1572 cannot be substantiated.⁸⁶ There is no evidence that the Zakhar’ins were pro-Western or that Western powers interfered in Russia on their behalf. The Livonian War was not directed against rebellious European powers rather than just Livonia (at least until other Baltic states intervened). No evidence links the printer Ivan Fedorov to the Judaizers (although he was accused of “heresy” for editing sacred texts); indeed no documents substantiate survival of the Judaizers into the reign of Ivan IV. Fomenko and Nosovskii exaggerate German “influence” during the *oprichnina* when only a handful of Germans served in it or served Ivan personally, such as captured Livonian mercenaries who entered Ivan’s service and fought at Molodi in 1572 against the Crimean Tatars. It is only by fusing Ivan III and Ivan IV as duplicates that Fomenko

and Nosovskii can somehow make the *oprichnina* an instrument of Judaizers even as they concede that the Russian Orthodox Church just called Lutherans “Judaizers.” Fomenko and Nosovskii treat German and Jewish/Judaizer influence in Muscovy as a single phenomenon of Western interference in Russian affairs.

The *oprichnina* was not directed primarily against Russian boyars, which should be obvious merely from the fact that it included the pogrom against Great Novgorod. That the pogrom against Great Novgorod really attacked Iaroslavl’ has no basis in history or archeology. “Moving” Iaroslavl’ to Great Novgorod on the Volkhov River would have required surmounting technical problems in falsification beyond even Fomenko and Nosovskii’s imagination.⁸⁷ That Ivan relocated to Novgorod after his pogrom against the city was hardly schizophrenic but it does suggest that accounts of Novgorod’s devastation were embellished. The archeology of Moscow precludes Fomenko and Nosovskii’s recreation of its history. It is hardly convincing that Tsarevich Ivan was not imprisoned or executed when he was overthrown because he was not held responsible for policies undertaken in his name. He was in his late teens at the time; leaving him at large would have been political idiocy because he would still have been a dangerous symbol. He could hardly have been permitted to live out a peaceful retirement until 1581.

The Zakhar’ins were not the major objects of the 1572 Moscow executions, which were directed against the Moscow bureaucracy and deportees from Novgorod. Fomenko and Nosovskii do not explain why it took two years for the new Ivan No. 4 to be crowned, and anyway there was no coronation. They also get the Simeon Bekbulatovich episode completely wrong. Simeon Bekbulatovich, before his baptism Sain-Bulat, was the great-grandson of Khan Ahmat of the Juchid ulus. He was probably born in 1545, which would make Ivan III’s parentage difficult since Ivan III died in 1504. Simeon’s attempt as Ivan No. 4 to restore Iaroslavl’ as capital has no foundation. Fomenko and Nosovskii disregard evidence that Ivan IV and Simeon coexisted and that Simeon lived until 1616. Even if “Ivan” (Ivan No. 1) was not directly responsible for Tsarevich Ivan’s death, a position toward which some legitimate historians now incline, Ivan IV would still have interpreted the death of his heir as God’s punishment for his sins and turned to the synodicals and pious donations to atone. Fomenko and Nosovskii have little appreciation of sixteenth-century Russian Orthodox belief, which is not surprising given their attitude toward religion in general. Their interpretation of the reign of Ivan IV rests upon willful disregard for facts and evidence which contradicts its arbitrary conclusions.⁸⁸

Fomenko and Nosovskii’s theory of the composite Ivan does not, as they claim, resolve all the contradictions in Ivan’s reign, and scarcely makes that reign simple

and understandable. There is nothing simple about keeping track of four rulers with the throne name “Ivan IV.” However, this creative writing does accomplish several unacknowledged purposes which shed considerable light upon Fomenko and Nosovskii’s historical prejudices. They say that Ivan’s use of terror dates *only* to the period of the *oprichnina*. To make this case they ignore a number of salient and unedifying episodes of Ivan’s behavior before 1563. But in this way the “real” Ivan IV is totally absolved of all responsibility for “Ivan’s” excesses. The “real” Ivan IV also maintains a consistent anti-Western policy in contrast to the demonized Zakhar’ in-Romanovs who are alone responsible for what was later described as the Crimean burning of Moscow. The “real” Ivan neither seeks asylum in England, a very unpalatable act for Russian patriots, nor even accidentally murders his son. Moreover the Livonian War was not Russian aggression against European civilization but a legitimate attempt to put down a European revolt against the legitimate Great (Russian) Empire. Fomenko and Nosovskii create an Ivan IV, Ivan No. 1, who might match their ideal Russian ruler.

Russian history after the reign of Ivan IV fares no better in the New Chronology. The connection of the Great Empire to the Razin and Pugachev revolts, or what was called “Great Tartary” on maps, rests upon the dubious identification of the Cossacks as the professional army of the Great Empire also known as the Horde. The Romanovs hardly possessed the capacity to rewrite all East Slavic history from the tenth century on, let alone coordinate a worldwide historical project to do the same for Europe and Asia, nor did they even try to undertake such a project. Officials told Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich that no current chronicle carried Rus’ history up to the present, not that no earlier Rus’ chronicles existed. The extensive Nikon Chronicle about Rus’ history from the Tower of Babel to 1567 derives its name from the fact that Patriarch Nikon owned a copy in the seventeenth century. To demean the Romanovs as consistently pro-Western Fomenko and Nosovskii disregard all evidence of Patriarch Filaret’s anti-Western views and policies, of seventeenth-century Muscovite anti-Western wars, even of Peter the Great’s Great Northern War. Echoing the Slavophiles, Fomenko and Nosovskii criticize Peter the Great for his adulation of Western cultural and technological superiority, consistent with the nationalist prejudices of the New Chronology, but his foreign policy is ignored in evaluating his “pro-Western” attitudes. Because relatively little of the New Chronology addresses modern Russian history, modern Russian historians in Russia and abroad have paid much less attention to Fomenko and Novsovskii than specialists in the ancient, medieval, and early modern history of Russia, Europe, and Asia.

Professional Russian historians deserve admiration for their willingness to undertake the thankless task of refuting the idiocies of the New Chronology's reconstruction of Russian history. Unfortunately, as Russian historians admit to their chagrin, their scholarly efforts have been completely unsuccessful in diminishing its popular appeal. Consequently scholars have also had to address the reasons for Fomenko and Nosovskii's success in order to understand the reasons for their own failure. Analyses of the popularity of the New Chronology illustrate the state of popular history in post-Soviet Russia. Any Russian educated in Russia would have been exposed since elementary school to concepts of Russian history which the New Chronology throws into the dustbin of history. Why so many Russians have accepted the New Chronology is a fascinating question for Western students of contemporary Russian culture, but for Russian historians the popularity of Fomenko and Nosovskii is more than an insult to their professional pride. It is virtually a life-threatening existential crisis. Some attempts to place the New Chronology within the context of the intellectual climate in Russia since the break-up of the Soviet Union have been more fruitful than others.⁸⁹

Linking the New Chronology to the "virtualization" of reality and adherence of youth to computer games reeks of old-fuddy-duddy-ism;⁹⁰ associating it with notions of Shambala, the Loch Ness monster, and UFOs is not helpful;⁹¹ discussing the New Chronology in the same breadth as the spread of corruption, prostitution, and "wild capitalism" in the 1990s⁹² sounds more hysterical than historical even if marginally linked to Fomenko and Nosovskii for, of all scholarly horrors, making money off their books.⁹³ Calling them Post-Modern slanders Post-Modernism.⁹⁴ Fomenko and Nosovskii have legitimately been grouped with other advocates of bizarre historical theories such as Murad Adzhiev's glorification of Polovtsy⁹⁵ as well as Olzhas Suleimenov and Aleksandr Ianov (Alexander Yanov),⁹⁶ but the flaw here is that only Fomenko and Nosovskii have broken out of the fringe to reach the general public and achieve wide notoriety on TV and the Internet, in newspapers, magazines, and books. There is an element of occultism in Fomenko and Nosovskii: Read these books and learn the secrets of the true history of Russia! But the lure of esoteric knowledge offered by the New Chronology has no mystical, spiritual, or supernatural element; Fomenko does not purport to be the new Madame Blavatskaia. Vsevolod Brodskii highlights the attraction of a method in which everyone can make up his own history (although "every man his own historian" is hardly a novel or even a uniquely Russian concept),⁹⁷ the joy of sensationalism. Conspiracy theories, one hastens to add, are scarcely confined to Russia⁹⁸ but the New Chronology stands out for its pretense of academic respectability and absence of political edge.⁹⁹ Seeing the New

Chronology's image of Russia as a super-nation which ruled a super-empire as a form of compensation for the breakup of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Soviet Empire undoubtedly explains some of its popularity¹⁰⁰ but not, as we have seen, its origins, since Fomenko conceived the New Chronology well before 1991. Sheiko rightly calls Fomenko-ism a mixture of "lost grandeur, hope, vengeance, and envy" directed against the lies of church chronicles, Romanov functionaries, and Communists alike, but so is Neo-Eurasianism, which may well have less popular but more elite support and definitely has more political clout than the New Chronology.¹⁰¹ Still, if you tell the Russian public what it wants to hear—Russia is, or at least was, great but everyone hates us—then the Russian public will sympathize with your concern for its aggrieved honor.

Fomenko's ideas were virtually unknown, let alone without adherents, outside Russia when they existed only in the Russian language.¹⁰² Since some of his work has begun appearing in English¹⁰³ the New Chronology has elicited non-Russian responses, some but not all hostile. Mathematicians seem more receptive to Fomenko and Nosovskii's methodology than historians but their entire lively debate is devoted exclusively to ancient and Western medieval history and thus outside our purview.¹⁰⁴ Shmidt comments that professional history is not as discredited in Europe as in Russia although the popularity of other conspiracy theories and alternative histories in Europe might mitigate that contrast.¹⁰⁵ The difference is that Soviet distortions of history were state-sponsored, and the Soviet state has since been discredited and dissolved; its historiography and control of history-writing could only be compared to that of other authoritarian regimes. It is nevertheless not accidental that much of Europe ignores the New Chronology. As Brodskii trenchantly observes, if known in Europe, Fomenko would be no more than a curiosity. The Scots are not going to believe that they are descendants of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, nor are Italians who grew up among Roman relics going to believe that Julius Caesar never existed.¹⁰⁶ What no critic of the New Chronology says outright is that a theory that Russia once ruled the world is intrinsically less attractive to non-Russians than to Russians, especially a theory consciously premised upon the aversion of West Europeans to admitting the "truth" of their conquests by Russians. Opponents of the New Chronology perhaps demur from addressing this issue to avoid exacerbating precisely the Russian anti-Western animus that fuels the New Chronology. However universal alternative history and conspiracy theories are in general, the mentality of the New Chronology is distinctly Soviet and post-Soviet, which limits its foreign appeal. According to Sheiko, the goal of whose monograph is to explain why Fomenko's fantasies are so popular, the New Chronology "succeeded in repackaging the patriotic elements of

Soviet ideology for a post-Soviet audience,” notably the Russian “greatness syndrome,” imperial identity, and opposition to the West.¹⁰⁷ Historians of the reign of Ivan IV, for example, readily admit that sixteenth-century texts were edited, revised, and censored, but that hardly rises to the level of historical duplicity which citizens of the former Soviet Union now realize was inflicted upon them under the Communists.¹⁰⁸ Soviet politics under Stalin did find ubiquitous conspiracies everywhere in Russia’s past and present. Some Soviet historians did pervert their scholarship on behalf of the regime. As current Russian historians ruefully admit, this phenomenon has tarred the entire historical profession in Russia and made alternative history more attractive. For this reason Fomenko, an amateur like Lomonosov, receives a warmer reception than he merits.¹⁰⁹ The less expertise in history someone has, the more qualified he or she becomes to write history, an evaluation which would hardly fly in Western Europe. Therefore Fomenko’s popularity in Russia might in part also explain his lack of comparable popularity abroad.

Sheiko also advances an interesting cyclical theory to explain Fomenko’s popularity in Russia. After nearly every major historical discontinuity in Russian history, he asserts, there was a major rewrite of history. Such revisionism, aiming to disparage the past regime, occurred after St. Vladimir’s conversion to Christianity [which is “Russian history” to Fomenko but East Slavic history in the West-CJH], during the reign of Peter the Great, and of course after the 1917 revolution and the overthrow of the Soviet Union in 1991. It would be surprising, Sheiko concludes, if something like the New Chronology had *not* arisen after 1991.¹¹⁰ While the scope of this explanation is impressive, it has two flaws. While the New Chronology became popular after 1991, it *originated* before 1991, so Sheiko’s chronology is deficient. Moreover, except for the New Chronology Sheiko references *official* state-sponsored historiography. The official rewrite of history after 1991 was hardly the New Chronology; rather, Russian Federation historiography was an eclectic mixture heavily infused with pre-revolutionary nationalism and overwhelmingly based upon precisely the “old” chronology which Fomenko rejects. Besides, previous rewrites re-interpreted previous history; Fomenko does not reinterpret, he eliminates previous history altogether.

Russian academic (and Western) explanations of the “Fomenko phenomenon” encompass many aspects of the popularity of the New Chronology. However, there are several salient issues which such scholarship has failed to consider adequately, if at all. These features of the New Chronology include its relationships to Marxism, Russian nationalism, Eurasianism, religion, and anti-Semitism, all of which would

speak to the question of the cultural milieu in which the New Chronology arose and the cultural milieu of the Russian people it seeks to seduce.

Apparently no one in Russia has inquired into the relationship between the New Chronology and Marxism. In 1981 the New Chronology was criticized not only in the Division of History (Otdelenie istorii) of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR but also in the Division of Science (Otdelenie nauk) of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).¹¹¹ Fomenko responded to early 1980s articles about him and letters to him by the astronomer and specialist in ancient astronomy Iurii Zaviniagin by writing a complaint to the Central Committee of the CPSU in 1984, probably in June, demanding it compel Zaviniagin, who was non-Party, to cease criticizing his new, “progressive” direction in history.¹¹² In late June or early July 1984, Zaviniagin was summoned by the Central Committee to the office of Dmitrii Vasil’evich Kuznetsov where for several hours he debated Fomenko for Kuznetsov’s edification. At one point it is claimed that the emotional Fomenko grabbed Zaviniagin by the collar and screamed in his face, “I am Soviet! I am Russian! I want our country to be as ancient as Rome!” Zaviniagin was neither distracted nor impressed by the implication that he was not Soviet, maybe not (ethnically?) Russian (his patronymic is Avraamievich), and not patriotic, and neither was Kuznetsov, who found Zaviniagin’s refutations of Fomenko convincing and refused to order Zaviniagin to print a retraction of his articles in *Voprosy istorii*. Instead Kuznetsov ordered Zaviniagin to send Fomenko a written report of his objections to the New Chronology. Zaviniagin also sent copies of his forty-one-page essay to Fomenko’s erstwhile supporter Postnikov and to the editor of *Voprosy istorii*, which did not publish it. Neither did *Voprosy istorii* in 1985 publish an anti-Fomenko article based upon Zaviniagin’s critique.¹¹³ At the very least this Kafkaesque confrontation suggests that in the post-Soviet and anti-Soviet environment after 1991 Fomenko exaggerated his quasi-dissident status under the Soviet regime to curry favor with the Russian public.

Nevertheless Fomenko did face an attack on his theory from a Marxist point of view. According to Sheiko, “Fomenko’s colleagues recalled” that Fomenko suffered “mild repression” in the 1970s. A special meeting of the Department of History of the Academy of Sciences rebuked him for his hypothesis of a utopian past, for the mythological and pseudo-religious atmosphere of his ideas.¹¹⁴ Fomenko’s world Russian empire might have been utopian and mythological, but “pseudo-religious” seems inappropriate to describe so secular a concept. In 1984 several critics charged that the New Chronology violated Marxism, denounced Fomenko to the Central Committee of the CPSU, and demanded that he be fired. He wasn’t. The perpetrators were led

by Academician Boris Rybakov, a well-known and politically influential historian of ancient Rus', archeologist, chauvinist, and anti-Semite. For expunging pre-1000 CE centuries from "Russian" (East Slavic) and world history, Fomenko was accused of violating the Marxist doctrine of the succession of economic formations—primitive (clan-tribal), slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism—because virtually all history would begin *in medias res* with feudalism.¹¹⁵ Such criticism was echoed by Academician Sergei Tikhvinskii, an otherwise reputable but conformist scholar.¹¹⁶ Whether Rybakov et al.'s rigid Soviet version of Marxism on this question was really Marxist is a separate question, but the aptness of the criticism depends upon what Fomenko and Nosovskii think actually happened before 1000. All they have written is that we have no reliable evidence of what happened, thereby implying that *something* did.¹¹⁷ Even a slave-owning society could plausibly leave virtually no written records. Therefore this question must remain open. It is obvious that Fomenko had sufficient clout with the Communist powers-that-were to survive an ideological attack on his theories unscathed.

Sheiko astutely comments that on the surface the New Chronology would seem to violate the Soviet version of Marxism. Fomenko focuses on "great men, geopolitics, the genealogy of royal families and the use of history as an instrument of power." However, Fomenko shares with Soviet scholarship its Manichean perception of the world, its nationalist primordialism, its presentation of history as objective truth, not a matter of interpretation, a world of certainty, not diverse opinion. Fomenko utilized a Soviet toolkit to fashion the New Chronology: empire worship, conspiracy theories, and dismissing opponents as "un-scientific." To Sheiko, Fomenko is a prisoner on the type of Soviet historical writing he grew up on.¹¹⁸

Sheiko's analysis has one weakness. Marxists would certainly have no trouble believing that a ruling class would falsify the past on behalf of its own legitimacy, so on that narrow question Fomenko and Nosovskii fall within accepted Marxist parameters. But Sheiko is correct in his assessment of how the New Chronology violates the spirit of Marxism. They address chronology, and chronology focuses on datable events which seem to come overwhelmingly from high politics. That is why they expend so much energy on dynasties and royal genealogy. The history of the economy and productive forces, even the history of the masses, overwhelmingly escape their attention. Long-term processes do not generate dates. Whether Fomenko and Nosovskii's elitist conception of history is entirely a function of their concentration on chronology is also an interesting but unexplored question. While much post-1991 historiography in Russia owes more of a debt to Soviet scholarship

than is admitted, in all likelihood eschewing Marxist themes in history and Marxist vocabulary cannot have hurt the popularity of the New Chronology.

Numerous emotional critics accuse Fomenko and Nosovskii of being unpatriotic.¹¹⁹ This is not because they eliminate Kievan Rus' from Russian history, since they still treat Ukrainians and Belarusians as "Russians" for later centuries; moreover, since 1991 some professional historians in Russia have begun to start Russian history with the thirteenth century so as to avoid Kyiv, now the capital of independent Ukraine. Rather it is because Fomenko and Nosovskii are supposedly guilty of maligning Russia's national past. Andrei Zalizniak wrote almost hysterically that the New Chronology reinforces the irrationalism of the present time among youth, facilitating magic and superstition; Fomenko and Nosovskii are writing books which are harmful to the Russian nation.¹²⁰ This criticism is quite ironic. Fomenko and Nosovskii claim only to be pursuing scholarly truth about glorious Russian history. It does not help that one proponent of this criticism, the literary scholar (*literaturoved*) Iurii Begunov, impugns his own former scholarly credentials by rabid anti-Semitism.¹²¹ Fomenko and Nosovskii decry "traditional" historiography for demeaning Russian history. Thus both camps on the issue of the New Chronology accuse the other of insulting Russian history. Advocates and opponents of the New Chronology, like contemporary political parties, debate who is more patriotic, which contributes as much to elucidating historical truth as partisan polemic does to national affairs.

Critics still have to explain how the "unpatriotic" drivel of Fomenko and Nosovskii attracts a mass audience. Kitsch can only explain this popularity so far, a popularity that dwarfs that of any other form, to use Dmitrii Volodikhin's terminology, of "folk history."¹²² Rather, most commentators ascribe the popularity of the New Chronology to its postulate of a more glorious virtual past for Russia than Russia's real past, one in which Russia literally ruled almost the entire world. Again and again Fomenko and Nosovskii assert that in their pro-Western sycophancy the Romanovs denied Russia its true past. (Ultrationalists hurl the same accusation at Fomenko and Nosovskii.) Fomenko and Nosovskii roundly criticize Western theories of Russian "aggression" as Russophobic diversions, cover-ups of the fact that Russian actions against Europe beginning with the Livonian War were in fact legitimate attempts to put down rebellions against the Great Empire. They deny that they have any ulterior motives, pontificating that "history is a science and has no room for dogma" and insisting that all they are doing is conducting scholarly research and uncovering scientific truth, that their Russian patriotism is not dogma but a scientifically well-founded appreciation of the "truth."¹²³ Proving they are

insincere is probably impossible. Few historians ever admit to being ideologically rigid or subjective. There is little reason to pursue *ad hominem* accusations of the motives of Fomenko and Nosovskii when what matters is the validity of the New Chronology, not why Fomenko dreamed it up.¹²⁴ The question is not the purity of his motives but the historical accuracy of his publications. Russian scholars who impugn Fomenko's patriotism violate their own scholarly credo of objectivity by such personal attacks.

The question of whether Fomenko and Nosovskii owe an intellectual debt to Eurasianism is a common theme of both Russian and Western analyses of the New Chronology.¹²⁵ Of course Eurasianism, and especially post-Soviet Neo-Eurasianism, are far from homogeneous, but some comparison can still be made. Superficially the New Chronology does appear to be congruent with some Eurasian and Neo-Eurasian concepts. Fomenko and Nosovskii emphasize Russian cooperation with Turkic peoples in building the Great Empire and defending it after its bifurcation into Muscovy and the Ottoman Empire. They attribute Russian-Turkish hostility in the seventeenth and later centuries to Western machinations designed to weaken the Russian "threat" to Europe. (Presumably the Ottoman-Crimean attack on Astrakhan' in 1569 would be explained in the same way.) The New Chronology appears to celebrate Islam and Buddhism and to value Inner Asian peoples, but as in Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism, Russian nationalism and frequently Russian Orthodoxy take pride of place in history.¹²⁶ In contrast to Eurasianism but as in Neo-Eurasianism, Fomenko and Nosovskii do not exalt the East. The New Chronology has more in common with the intellectual approach of Eurasianism than with Neo-Eurasianism but shares the Neo-Eurasianist Gumilev's aversion to the humanities. And there is no question but that the popularity of Eurasianism in the 1920s and of the New Chronology after 1991 share the intellectual function of compensating for the loss of empire with an anti-Western animus. Fomenko and Nosovskii declare that Russia is neither Europe nor Asia but ruled *both* in the past, just as the Neo-Eurasianist Aleksandr Dugin proposes that Europe and Asia will be dominated by Russia in the future. Marlène Laruelle concludes that the New Chronology has "customized" the Eurasian tradition of a Russocentric Empire. Russia is and always was an empire; Asia is subordinate to Russia; Belarus, Ukraine, and (Soviet) Central Asia are part of Russia.¹²⁷ Sheiko describes the New Chronology as "inspired, in part" by Eurasianism and facilitated by Gumilev's reevaluation of the "Mongol conquest" as an alliance. However, as much as Turkic assistance is necessary for Russia to withstand the West, Fomenko see the Mongols not as equal members of such an alliance but as definitely subordinate to their Russian superiors. Sheiko sees the

greatest affinities between Fomenko and the cultural Eurasianism of Aleksandr Blok and the Scythians, a fascination with the strength of Asia but no love for Asians, not classical Eurasianism or any of the forms of Neo-Eurasianism. To Fomenko, Sheiko concludes, Eurasianism is “simply too Asian.” Sheiko infers that Fomenko is trying to counteract alternative, separatist histories among the Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens and other “Asian” peoples in order to maintain the unity of the Russian Federation under Russian hegemony. Fomenko and Nosovskii were offering the Turks a new partnership with the Russians in a “multi-cultural, bilingual mixed-ethnic empire.”¹²⁸

However, the seeming overlap between Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism on the one hand and the New Chronology on the other is misleading. The New Chronology lacks any geopolitical determinism. No geographic determinates could possibly be consistent with Fomenko and Nosovskii’s conception of the scope of the Great Empire, which in the New Chronology expanded well beyond even the admittedly impressive boundaries of the Mongol Empire. The Great Empire, according to the New Chronology, succeeded where the Mongols failed in conquering Mamluk Egypt and Japan. The Mongols never invaded Western Europe and the Mongol Empire was no longer functioning when the New World was discovered. Nor does the Great Empire coincide geographically with the Eurasianist definition of Eurasia, which excluded some Mongol conquests such as China and Iran. In time and space the Great Empire is not a duplicate of the Mongol empire.

The Eurasianists saw the Mongol conquest of Russia as *the* central event, *the* turning point, in Russia’s history, but Fomenko and Nosovskii deny that the Mongol conquest ever took place or that there were any “Mongols” from Mongolia in the western Eurasian steppe. The New Chronology, by eliminating pre-1000 CE history, also emasculates the Inner Asian nomadic and imperial traditions of the Hsiung-nu, Huns, Avars, and Türks from which the Eurasianists’ Mongol Empire derived and to which the Eurasianist George Vernadsky devoted much attention. Although at least the early Eurasianists professed to be apolitical scholars, as a whole Eurasianism was overtly political. The Eurasian movement fragmented on the issue of political activism, not over whether Eurasian ideas have political implications for foreign and domestic Russian policy.¹²⁹ Neo-Eurasianism is blatantly political. Fomenko and Nosovskii go no further than urging Russians to throw off the intellectual yoke of traditional chronology and embrace their glorious past. They do not outline the political consequences of such a revolution in national memory.¹³⁰ The New Chronology lacks the messianic dimensions of Eurasianism and Neo-Eurasianism, although Fomenko and Nosovskii are as fervent in proselytizing the New Chronology as any Eurasianist or Neo-Eurasianist prophet. They do not discuss the idea of reviving

the Great Empire, which would be even more absurd than their theory that it ever existed. Nor do they impute to Russia any role in leading the world to some ideal future. Fomenko and Nosovskii do not see a messianic voice as any more compatible with their scientific pose than mysticism.¹³¹ Of course the New Chronology undercuts Adzhi's anti-Russian views but there is no evidence that Fomenko and Nosovskii are addressing the New Chronology to an audience of Turkic minorities. The political edge Sheiko ascribes to the New Chronology seems incompatible with his own observation that it is closer to cultural Scythianism than to the explicitly political Neo-Eurasianism of someone like Dugin. More importantly the New Chronology originated *before* 1991 so only its popularity post-1991 shares the end-of-empire context of Eurasianism. Anti-Westernism is endemic in Russian intellectual history and need not have its roots in any one specific Russian ideological movement. In sum the intellectual and cultural differences between the New Chronology and Eurasianism/Neo-Eurasianism greatly dwarf their similarities.¹³²

The role of religion in the New Chronology is very murky. The value placed upon religion also distinguishes the New Chronology from Eurasianism. Despite extolling the religious toleration of the Mongol Empire, the Eurasianists held Russian Orthodoxy to be the glue of empire. They were loyal sons of the Russian Orthodox Church. The attitude of Fomenko and Nosovskii toward Russian Orthodoxy is very complex. Not of course in the estimation of the Russian Orthodox Church, which took a dim view of their conclusions concerning Jesus and scripture. In his 2004 dissertation Konstantin Sheiko wrote that Fomenko was declared an Antichrist in the early 1990s, but he has since clarified that statement: various critics of the New Chronology called him Anti-Christ but there was no official Russian Church anathema.¹³³ In his 2009 monograph Sheiko now writes that Fomenko during the 1990s was "labeled" an anti-Christ, but without specifying by whom or citing any examples.¹³⁴ Three web-sites, including one run by the Russian Orthodox Church, contain numerous articles and links to even more numerous articles criticizing the New Chronology from the point of view of Russian Orthodoxy, emphasizing in particular its revision of Christian history and dating of scripture.¹³⁵ Fomenko and Nosovskii, and their publishers insist otherwise, asserting disingenuously that the revised chronology does not address questions of religious dogma and that the authors have a profound respect for believers. Arguing that St. Vladimir was one of the three Magi does not seem all that respectful toward believers.

Peculiarly, Fomenko and Nosovskii do favor Orthodoxy in several ways. They propose that Christianity existed before Jesus' Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, which would have been a very strange bird indeed.¹³⁶ The Byzantine

Empire was Orthodox. After the split between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, Orthodoxy was closer to original Christianity than Catholicism, which was influenced by Roman polytheism and orgiastic cults. Fomenko and Nosovskii insist that although the Great Empire was Orthodox Christian it practiced religious toleration. This assertion is paradoxical and confusing. According to Fomenko and Nosovskii during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when the Great Empire was at its height the three main alternative organized religions, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam, did not yet exist. Thus their adherents could hardly have needed religious toleration. Perhaps Fomenko and Nosovskii mean that the Great Empire was tolerant of animists or folk religion. They also claim that the first religious persecution of Jews and Muslims in Russian history came during the *oprichnina* and thus was the work of the pro-Western Zakhar'ins, who implicitly imported their bigotry from Western Europe, a conclusion contradicted by Ivan IV's 1550 decree barring the entrance of Polish-Lithuanian Jewish merchants into Muscovy. Similarly, the treatment of the 1552 conquest of Kazan' as a triumph of Christianity over Islam occurred well before the accession of the Zakhar'ins in 1563, although presumably the drowning of Jews in captured Polotsk who refused to convert in 1563 came after the putative installation of Ivan No. 3.

Two Russian Orthodox critics of the New Chronology link it to occultism. G. E. Eliseev concludes that Fomenko and Nosovskii hate Christianity because it stands in the way of their reconstruction of history, insisting that it is no coincidence that the New Chronology singles out L. Ron Hubbard for praise or shares a strong cultural affinity with "New Age" occultism.¹³⁷ Marina Zhurinskaia proclaims that religion and science (*nauka*) share an opposition to the New Chronology, which is antiscientific and antireligious, pseudoscience and pseudoreligion (irrational occultism). She links the popularity of the New Chronology to Soviet atheistic propaganda.¹³⁸ Certainly the traditional chronology of Christian history could not be reconciled with the New Chronology, but Fomenko and Nosovskii do not seem devotees of Scientology, and their "occultism" is decidedly rationalistic. They are too busy insulting "traditional" chronology to make fun of popular religious devotion or church exploitation of popular "superstition" to defend church wealth, the leitmotifs of Soviet atheistic propaganda. Occultism and atheism would seem to be red herrings in dissecting the appeal of the New Chronology.

The ambivalent attitude of the New Chronology toward religion in general and Russian Orthodoxy in particular has not insulated it from strident and vehement criticism by believers. That ambivalence has isolated Fomenko and Nosovskii from a dominant element of much current Russian culture, Russian Orthodoxy. On the

other hand, perhaps the very popularity of the New Chronology suggests that the cultural hegemony of Russian Orthodoxy in contemporary Russia has limits.

An issue related to Fomenko and Nosovskii's attitude toward religion is the validity of the charge of anti-Semitism against some adherents of the New Chronology.¹³⁹ This accusation is ironic considering that such rabid anti-Semites as Rybakov and Begunov were and are among Fomenko and Nosovskii's critics. Laruelle concludes that anti-Semitism is "largely absent" from their works but that their Russification of history leaves little room for Jews.¹⁴⁰ Sheiko writes that "explicit anti-Semitism takes a mild form in Fomenko" and Jews played a minimal role in Russian history.¹⁴¹ Neither Laruelle nor Sheiko discuss some troubling patterns, passages and theories relevant to Jews in Fomenko and Nosovskii's writings. Jews unquestionably would not react with equanimity to Fomenko and Nosovskii's version of the history of Judaism. They see Judaism as an outgrowth of Christianity (reversing the "traditional" sequence of Christianity evolving out of Judaism) among the Empire's finance experts, its treasurers and financiers, a genealogy which impermissibly feeds the Jewish banker stereotype. (In fact Muslims and Nestorian Christians served the Mongol Empire's financial needs far more often than Jews.) Such stereotyping is hardly alleviated by their observation that because of their empirewide activities the Jews became cosmopolitan, long a Soviet anti-Semitic euphemism.¹⁴² Indeed a New Chronology supporter has been accused of anti-Semitism for criticizing "foreign" historians like Müller as cosmopolitans.¹⁴³ Fomenko and Nosovskii's use of such a divisive buzzword to criticize Jews can hardly be overlooked. As noted above, the Zakhar'in-Romanovs are accused of patronizing Jews and Judaizers to the detriment of the Russian-Horde World Empire. Fomenko and Nosovskii's treatment of several books of the Old Testament elevates this anti-Jewish interpretation of the reign of Ivan IV to another level. Supposedly Ivan's reign was allegorized in several books of the Old Testament written in the seventeenth century. The Old Testament stories of Samson, Esther and Judith are Romanov rewrites of the history of Ivan IV's reign. Samson is a composite of the boyar Ivan Fedorov-Cheliadnin and Metropolitan Filipp (Kolychev), both victims of the *oprichnina*; the Philistines stand in for the *oprichniki*, that is, the Jews. In the biblical story of Esther the *oprichnina* pogrom against the *zemshchina* is portrayed as the Jewish pogrom against the Persians. Likewise in the book of Judith the Jewish pogrom against the Assyrians reflects West European persecution of Russia.¹⁴⁴ Thus in revising the history of the *oprichnina*, according to the New Chronology, the Romanovs turned the role of the Jews upside down, from perpetrators of a pogrom to its victims. From the oppressor the Jews became in these new Old Testament books the oppressed. The Jews become

the “bad guys” in Russian history, the villains of Ivan IV’s reign, the bloodthirsty, usurping, pro-Western *oprichniki* and the negative, unpatriotic stalking dogs of pernicious, Western-influence, the Judaizers. No doubt this harsh treatment of the Judaizers is an explicit reaction against some favorable Soviet views of the Judaizers as Renaissance humanists and not Judaizers at all, but that is hardly the end of the matter. Certainly the Jews of Polotsk were victims of Russian prejudice in 1563, but in Fomenko and Nosovskii’s retelling the Jews are accused of perpetrating a pogrom, a vicious and bigoted subversion of Russian anti-Semitic behavior in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Fomenko and Nosovskii share with the anti-Semites who advocated canonizing Ivan an obsession with putatively real, not metaphoric, but actually nonexistent Jews and Judaizers during the reign of Ivan IV.¹⁴⁵ Fomenko and Nosovskii have nothing in common with this crowd of religious extremists, yet somehow they have imbibed their perverted approach to the reign of Ivan IV, which is as much a distortion of history as the New Chronology’s four Ivans.¹⁴⁶

Anti-Semitism would link the New Chronology to all too many segments of the population and intellectual currents in Russia today and could provide a potential bridge to an expanded audience. However, the anti-Semitism in the New Chronology’s treatment of Russian history seems extraneous, not entirely integrated into Fomenko and Nosovskii’s historical views. Since all biblical and early medieval Jewish history disappear from the history in the New Chronology, because Jews did not yet exist, perhaps it would be worthwhile to compare what Fomenko and Nosovskii have written on Jews in the Great Empire and sixteenth-century Russia to any comments they make on Jews in medieval and early modern Europe. In the meantime it should be added for perspective that Fomenko and Nosovskii’s views of Islam and Buddhism would hardly be greeted positively by Muslims or Buddhists either. Nor would the pope appreciate their description of medieval Roman Catholicism as more distant from primitive Christianity than Orthodox Christianity, if he bothered to pay attention to the New Chronology in the first place. But because the issue of Judaism is inseparable from the issue of the Jews in history, Fomenko and Nosovskii’s anti-Semitic images stand out above and beyond their overall denigration of all religions other than Russian Orthodox Christianity.

One element of Russian academic antipathy toward Fomenko and Nosovskii is disciplinary elitism. Many historians, linguists, and archeologists resent amateurs intruding into their professional domains, especially when they do so with the explicit premise that all the professionals are wrong and proceed to gut vast swaths of scholarship on the issues about which they write. Still sometimes even these critics admit that amateurs and dilettantes can make legitimate contributions to history, *if* they

bring their own disciplines to bear upon historical problems in a legitimate manner and shed fresh light upon them, and *if* they cooperate with historians. Fomenko and Nosovskii disingenuously insist they do cooperate with professional historians.¹⁴⁷ However, according to V. Khrabrov, Fomenko once stormed out of a meeting with professional historians who had unanimously rejected his theories proclaiming them all to be “ignoramus,” which Khrabrov, who refers to Fomenko’s “terrorism and obscurantism [*mrakobesie*],” thinks better describes Fomenko and hardly constitutes “cooperation” with historians.¹⁴⁸ Professional historians dispute Fomenko’s pretense of interdisciplinary cooperation. In this regard C. P. Snow’s “two cultures” rears its easily recognizable head.¹⁴⁹ Fomenko and Nosovskii are accused of attacking the humanities or only pretending to bring the methods of deductive mathematical logic into an arena where they have no place. The dichotomy between humanists and scientists intrudes into an analysis of Fomenko and Nosovskii’s audience by their critics. According to one critic, himself a “doctor of technical sciences,” only those without historical education like technical personnel, engineers, or medical types believe the New Chronology; they buy Fomenko and Nosovskii’s books because it feeds their scientific prejudice against the humanities. Another critic refers to teachers and engineers as purchasers of Fomenko and Nosovskii’s books.¹⁵⁰ The derogatory references reflect humanist antiscientific prejudice against engineers and intellectual elitism against teachers as semi-intelligentsia. No studies of Fomenko and Nosovskii’s readership are cited to document such generalizations.¹⁵¹ Perhaps intellectual snobbery is relevant to Sheiko’s insistence that it is the simplicity of Fomenko’s answer to the question of Russian identity which makes his ideas popular, not his revised chronology. Fomenko’s readers have a streak of sadomasochism, because his theory is incomprehensible, but they are attracted by Fomenko’s novelty. After Soviet historical dogma was overthrown, the Russian public sought in the New Chronology a return to certainty.¹⁵² Sheiko would certainly claim that *he* understands the New Chronology, and I suspect he underestimates the skepticism of the Russian reading public at Soviet verities. De-Stalinization may have been a shock in 1956, but by the time of the collapse of Marxist historiography by 1991 the extent of Soviet perversion of history could hardly have come as a surprise. Stigmatizing Fomenko and Nosovskii’s readers is hardly conducive to inducing them to change their minds.

Generic intelligentsia elitism toward the “gray masses” also protrudes into these discussions. The popularity of Fomenko and Nosovskii is attributed to the failure of Russian secondary schools to teach history or to the gullibility of a “people” (*narod*) saturated with sensationalism by mass culture which prefers simplifications and

accepts myths as true when they are repeated often enough. Fomenko and Nosovskii are reputed to practice the propaganda techniques of Joseph Goebbels. Acceptance of the New Chronology becomes a new version of mass hypnosis like the Inquisition or medieval witch-hunts.¹⁵³

What all such elitist explanations of the popularity of the New Chronology fail to understand or even admit is that the audience of the New Chronology has had some exposure at some level to the views of professional historians but prefers the views of Fomenko and Nosovskii. Attributing their preference to ignorance is just another way of avoiding the failure of professional historians to persuade a significant minority of the general public to agree with “traditional” scholarship rather than amateur alternative authorities on Russian history.

The “Fomenko phenomenon” is clearly complicated. As a contribution to history the New Chronology is devoid of any socially redeeming value. Nevertheless it still merits study because understanding its appeal sheds light on popular opinion and historical memory in Russia. Some of the intellectual roots of the New Chronology such as anti-Westernism clearly run deep in Russian intellectual history; others spring forth from aspects of specifically Soviet culture such as assertions of Russian creative priority, or as reactions to features of Soviet culture such as official distortions of history. Blaming the perfidious and manipulative West for what went “wrong” with Russian history can be traced back to the Slavophiles, but their first villain was Peter the Great. Fomenko and Nosovskii antedate Romanov anti-Russian “toadying to the West” to even before the accession of Mikhail Romanov in 1613 in the actions of the Zakhar’ in-Romanovs during the reign of Ivan IV.

It might be assumed that the animus of the New Chronology against the Romanovs reflects Soviet Marxist antimonarchism, but Soviet antimonarchism was tempered by Great Russian nationalism, and the New Chronology seems to take at least a non-Marxist if not anti-Marxist approach to history. In privileging knowledge from the natural sciences, including mathematics and astronomy, the New Chronology does reify the Soviet cult of science, but that cult derived from Imperial Russian valuations of science and was offset in part by Soviet dedication to humanist study, especially of literature, art, and folklore. The relationship of Soviet atheism to the New Chronology’s view of religion seems tenuous. There are echoes of Russian and Soviet anti-Semitism in its treatment of Judaism and Jews despite the cultural gap between proponents of the New Chronology and Russian Orthodox extremist anti-Semites, but the presence of anti-Semites among the critics of the New Chronology illustrates the pervasiveness of intellectual anti-Semitism in Russia today and its total lack of homogeneity.

The similarities between the New Chronology and Eurasianism/Neo-Eurasianism have been exaggerated. The popularity of the New Chronology would seem to reflect

the same mechanism once characteristic of the much more limited popularity of Eurasianism among a much more limited target audience of émigré intellectuals, that is, compensating for political loss via history, inventing a more exalted historical past, with its promise of a more glorious future. However, unlike Eurasianism the New Chronology appears not to have a political agenda, which no observer of the “movement” has in any way explained, and Fomenko and Nosovskii vociferously profess to be apolitical. Nevertheless, the rabid anti-Western animus, strident Russian nationalism, and not always latent anti-Semitism of the New Chronology are highly charged politically, and resonate with right-wing political policies advocated by conservative politicians, including Neo-Eurasianists. The inclusion of New Chronology precepts in school curricula suggests a modicum of political support for its reconstruction of Russian history.

The New Chronology, even if it arose before the fall of Soviet Communism, draws its credibility among a significant minority of the Russian people from the skepticism of “official” history produced by the abuse of history under the Soviet Union. In Soviet times professional historians, at least those who conformed sufficiently to the Party line, were honored, respected, and rewarded. Disillusionment following the disclosure of the full dimensions of the Soviet distortion of history, not just the Stalinist “cult of personality,” surely persuades many Russians to disrespect the learned judgment of professional historians. It should be added that the New Chronology also discards the judgments of other humanist academics like linguists and archeologists as well as of those natural scientists such as astronomers and mathematicians who try to refute the New Chronology, so the “revolt against history” is part and parcel of a revolt against the intellectual establishment as a whole rather than a reaction exclusively to Soviet historiography. Ironies abound in the history of the development of the New Chronology. Eurasianism was created by the Bolshevik Revolution; the superficially Eurasianist New Chronology owes its take-off to the demise of the Bolshevik Revolution. An academician and professor at an elite university who was a member in good standing of the Soviet establishment and is still a member in good standing of the post-Soviet establishment, although not for his contributions to the New Chronology, has become the godfather to an antiestablishment attack on “traditional” Russian history. “It is ironic therefore that Fomenko, a leading Soviet scientist and erudite amateur in the social sciences, should attempt to impart to the next generation a model of history that seems to transgress every rule of science.”¹⁵⁴ As a result of the concatenation of multiple intellectual and cultural processes, the discipline of history per se in Russia must bear the brunt of the burden of atoning for past Soviet sins against Russian history. The final irony is that the New Chronology distorts history at least as much as the worst Stalinist Soviet historiography which prepared the soil for its birth.

Notes

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1. Nikolay N. Kradin, “‘Stateless Head’: Notes on Revisionism in the Studies of Nomadic Societies,” *Ab Imperio* 2009, no. 4:117–28, here 120 n. 7, estimates that the number of copies of Fomenko’s books which have been sold reaches six digits. Fomenko’s English-language publisher Delamere claims 300,000 copies of Fomenko’s books are in print; Konstantin Sheiko in collaboration with Stephen Brown [hereafter Sheiko with Brown], *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past: Anatolii Fomenko and the Rise of Alternative History in Post-Communist Russia*. Foreword by Donald Ostrowski (Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society, vol. 86; Stuttgart: ibidem, 2009), 17.

2. S. I. Tsadikov, “Mify narodov mira. Noveishaia khronologiiia,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 2. “Novaia khronologiiia”—eto serezno?, ed. I. A. Nastenka (Moscow: SPSL-“Russkaia panorama,” 2001), 149, 160.

3. Marlène Laruelle, “Alternative History, Conspiracy and Nostalgia for Empire: The Case of Fomenko,” in Laruelle, *Euphemizing Antisemitism: Conspiracy Theories, Alternative History and New Academic Disciplines in Russia* (I wish to express my sincerest appreciation to Dr. Laruelle for providing me with a draft English translation of the relevant portion of her forthcoming monograph); Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 16.

4. The website <http://www.newchrono.ru>, to which David Goldfrank called my attention (see n. 52 below), attests to the fact that Fomenko and Nosovskii continue to publish extensively to the present.

5. The exceptions are Florin Diacu, *The Lost Millennium. History’s Timetables under Siege* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, Canada, 2005) and Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*.

6. The following works have been consulted: G. V. Nosovskii and A. T. Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Faktorial,” 1997); idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus’. Russko-ordynskaia imperiia i Bibliia. Novaia matematicheskaia khronologiiia drevnosti*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Faktorial,” 1998) (this two-volume work was abbreviated and simplified as idem, *Rus’-Orda na stranitsakh bibleiskikh knig* [Moscow: Anvik, 1998]); idem, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu (Kakoi seichas vek?)* (Moscow: KRAFT+, LEAN, 1999); idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiiia* (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel’skii dom “Delovoi ekspress,” 1999); idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Issledovaniia 1999–2000 godov. Novaia khronologiiia* (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel’skii dom “Delovoi ekspress,” 2000); idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Zhanna d’Ark, Samson i russkaia istoriia. Novaia khronologiiia. S prilozheniem “Arki Slavy Imperatora Maksimiliana I” sozdannoi A. Diurerom;*

i s prilozheniem svodnykh khronologicheskikh tablits dat i imen pravitelei (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel'skii dom "Delovoi ekspres," 2002); and Anatoly T. Fomenko and Gleb V. Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4. Russia, Britain, Byzantium, Rome*, tr. Michael Jagger (London: Delamere Publishing, 2007) (despite typographical and translation errors that reflect the translator's historical ignorance, on the whole this is a serviceable English translation). L. I. Bocharov, N. N. Efimov, I. M. Chachukh, and I. Iu. Chernyshov, *Zagovor protiv russkoi istorii (fakty, zagadki, versii)* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Anvik," 1998) (hereafter *Zagovor protiv russkoi istorii*) is a supportive if not always faithful popular distillation of Fomenko and Nosovskii's theories; it contains an interview with Fomenko, 7–14.

7. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 35–40, 666–71, 676–77.

8. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 236–73; Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 63–65. Morozov, did, however, originate the theory that the Radziwill Chronicle was primary to the Laurentian and Hypatian Chronicles. Ibid, 25–27. See below.

9. For that reason I will refer to the coauthors as Fomenko and Nosovskii, although their book covers always list Nosovskii's name first, in alphabetical order in Russian. The noun *fomenkovshchina* and adjective *fomenkovskaia* refer to the New Chronology movement. See Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 28. Igor Fedyukin informs me (personal communication, 6 January 2009), that Lev Danikin is writing a biography of Fomenko based in part upon extensive interviews.

10. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 63–114, 196–226, 230–72.

11. Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 11–48.

12. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 47–63; Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 49–63.

13. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 116–25.

14. Nosovskii and Fomenko. *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Zhanna d'Ark, Samson i russkaia istoriia*, 11–28.

15. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 495–514.

16. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 26–30. Scalinger and Petavius did not, however, write anything about Russian history.

17. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 315–44.

18. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 111.

19. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiia*, 59–91.
20. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 351–56; idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiia*, 101–64; idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 1: 135–551. *Zagovor protiv russkoi istorii*, 20, includes the Balkans, Scandinavia, and Poland among the conquests of the Great Empire.
21. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiia Rusi*, 131–54; idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Zhanna d'Ark, Samson i russkaia istoriia*, 117–33; Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 252.
22. The analysis in Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 2: 125–96, is heavily based upon the Book of Mormon.
23. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiia Rusi*, 224.
24. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiia*, 203–04.
25. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 360–63.
26. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiia Rusi*, 166–82, illustration 6, 171; idem, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 364–72; idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 1: 108–18; idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiia*, 297–356; Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 237–49.
27. The “traditional” chronology of Ivan’s sons is as follows: the first Tsarevich Dmitrii, son of Tsaritsa Anastasiia, born October, 1552, died June, 1553; Tsarevich Ivan, born 1554, died November, 1581; Tsarevich and later Tsar Fedor, born May, 1557, died 1598; the second Tsarevich Dmitrii, son of Tsaritsa Maria Nagaia, born October, 1582, died 1591.
28. Fomenko and Nosovskii do not clearly distinguish between actual Jews or accused Judaizers on the one hand and Lutherans who were called Judaizers by the Russian Orthodox Church on the other.
29. *Zagovor protiv russkoi istorii*, 24, dates the Terror to the regency of Grand Princess Elena Glinskaia, Ivan IV’s mother, and her lover Prince Ivan Telepnev-Ovchin-Obolenskii, in which case it began in 1533 and ran under them until 1537 when Elena died and Ovchin-Obolenskii was terminated with extreme prejudice. Implicitly the Terror was not resumed until 1563–1565.
30. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 357–60.
31. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiia Rusi*, 183–84, 187.
32. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 372–74.

33. Fomenko and Nosovskii, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 250–68, 298–353.
34. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 20–46.
35. Marina Zhurinskaia, “Son razuma porozhdaet chudovisch,” http://www.pravoslavie.ru/press/ao_sonrazuma1.htm, accessed 28 July 2009, again and again asks why the supposed falsification of history posited by the New Chronology took place, but that question has been answered at repetitious length in Fomenko and Nosovskii’s works: because of Western and Romanov Russophobia.
36. Fomenko and Nosovskii, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 436–41.
37. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 456–67.
38. A. E. Petrov, “Progulka po frontovoi Moskve s Mamaem, Tokhtamyshem i Fomenko,” in *Anti-istoriia, vychislennaia matematikami. O novoi khronologii Fomenko i Nosovskogo* [hereafter *Anti-istoriia*], ed. S. O. Shmidt (Moscow: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi humanitarnyi universitet, 2006), 186, and A. A. Karevskii and K. V. Belyi, “Novaia Genealogiia Romanovykh,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika - 3*, ed. I. A. Nastenka (Moscow: “Russkaia panorama,” 2002), 229, wonder whether Fomenko and Nosovskii’s obvious gift for fantasy might not have been better applied to writing in the manner of Tolkien. Oleg Svirgstin, “Istochniki po ‘nkh’ i ‘tkh’ i stereotypy . . .,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika - 4. Kritika “novoi khronologii” v internete*, ed. I. A. Nastenka, comp. S. A. Fatiushkin (Moscow: “Russkaia panorama,” 2003), 108, writes that not all insane nonsense is brilliant theory.
39. Many articles in anti–New Chronology anthologies appeared previously or subsequently in journals, many appear in more than one anthology, nearly all are also available on the Internet. Only duplicate print publications inspected *de visu* are cited here. Page references are from the first version of an article consulted, not necessarily the earliest or the fullest. There is an infinite quantity of additional critiques on the Internet which were not accessed by this writer. However, criticisms of Fomenko and Nosovskii are as repetitious as their own works.
 See Dmitrii Volodikhin, Ol’ga Eliseeva, and Dmitrii Oleinikov, *Istoriia Rossii v melkii goroshek* (Moscow: Maufaktura-Edinstvo, 1998); *Anti-istoriia*; *Istoriia i antiistoriia. Kritika “Novoi khronologii” akademika A. T. Fomenko*, comp. A. D. Khoshelev (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul’tury, 2000); Iu. K. Begunov, *Antifomenko. Russkaia istoriia protiv “Novoi khronologii”* (Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2001); V. L. Ianin, ed. & comp., *Mify “Novoi khronologii.” Materialy konferentsii na istoricheskoi fakul’tete MGU M. V. Lomonosova 21 Dekabria 1999 goda*, Series “Antifomenko” (Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2001); B. G. Litvak, “Staraiia mifologiiia ‘novoi khronologii,’” in *Paradoksy rossiiskoi istoriografii na perelome epokh* (St Petersburg: Bulanin, 2002), 137–47; *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [vol. 1], ed. I. A. Nastenka (Moscow: SPSL–“Russkaia panorama,” 2001); *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika – 2*. This volume contains a very informative review by V. V. Degoev, “‘Antifomenko’: opyt otrezveniiia ot kollektivnogo gipnoza. Oklik na vykhod tematicheskogo toma SRIO s kritikoi ‘novoi khonologii,’” 176–80, of *Sbornik russkogo istoricheskogo obshestva* [hereafter *SRIO*] 3 (151)

(Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2000); *SRIO* 3 (151); although this volume was inaccessible to me, many of the MGU conference papers it contains are available in other venues.

See also “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” *Kritika “novoi khronologii” A. T. Fomenko (otvet po sushchestvu)*, comp. Ustin Chashchikhin (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “ANVIK K,” 2001) (on this anthology see I. A. Nastenok and Iu. V. Iashnev, “‘Tak ono i okazalos’!’ Replika na vykhod knigi s kritikoi ‘novoi khronologii’ v izdatel’stve ‘Anvik K’,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 2, 181–83); Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past; Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3; *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 4. For a non-Russian response see Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*. Trofim Sidorenko, “Krivoe zerkalo istorii?” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 233–34, defines the New Chronology methodology as “associative history” (?).

40. A. A. Gorskii, *Rus’. Ot slavianskogo Rasseleniia do Moskovskogo tsarstva* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskoi kul’tury, 2204), 6 n. 2, describes the “New Chronology” as the attempt by dilettantes to solve “pseudoproblems.”

41. V. L. Ianin, “‘Ziiaiuschie vysoty’ akademika Fomenko,” in *Anti-istoriia*, 87–96, here 95–96, originally published in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 310–20, and reprinted in *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 2000, no. 4: 3–9, *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 6–12, Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 21–29, and “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” 121–29.

42. S. O. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’ v kontekste izucheniia sovremennogo obshchestvennogo istoricheskogo soznaniia” (hereafter, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’”), in *Anti-istoriia*, 320.

43. Begunov, *Antifomenko*, 18.

44. Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 249–54.

45. The editor(s) of *Rodina* 1997, no. 6: 20, in a section called *Repetitor* presumably supplied the satirical caption to a reproduction of V. M. Vaznetsov’s painting *After the Battle of Igor’ Sviatoslavich with the Polovtsy* (full of corpses of dead warriors) which identifies the painting as putatively about the Igor’ Tale and painted in 1880 but proved by the latest facts to have actually been painted in 1980 and called *Historians of Russia After a Discussion with Fomenko*.

46. M. Iu. Sokolov, “‘Udovol’sstvie byt’ sirotai (K itogam konferentsii),” in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 76–81, here 76, reprinted in Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 268–72.

47. For example I. N. Danilevskii, “Pustye mnozhestva ‘novoi khronologii’. Neskol’ko predvaritel’nye zamechaniia,” in *Anti-istoriia*, 15–47, objects that Ivan’s seven marriages were not unique in Russia, citing two non sequiturs, St. Vladimir who was a pagan when he was polygamous and Henry VIII who was not Russian. This article also appears in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 12–42. Even Sheiko’s admirable monograph contains far too many errors of fact. See David Goldfrank’s review, *Slavic Review* 69:4 (Winter, 2010), 1019–20, which notes (1020): “The book, though, contains some factual mistakes, which should have been caught before publication and certainly do not sit well in a study aiming to expose and refute fraud. These concern, among other things, the fate of Igor in *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, the date of Nicholas I’s

coronation, the chronological order of the Mongol conquest of Rus and China, the application of “medieval” (164, 172) to the eighteenth-century archbishop of Mogila/Mahiliou, Georgii Koniskii/Heorhii Konys’kyi, the survival of original documents from the reign of Ivan IV, the number of his wives (218), the location of Troitsa-Sergiev Monastery, the title of Vasilii III, and the adolescent age of Boris Godunov’s heir. The handling of such issues as the *Poslanie na Ugry*, the death of Anastasiia Romanova, “Western” estimations of Muscovy, and the alleged German ascendancy in the mid-eighteenth century also appears overly simplistic. But these are the honest shortcomings of a useful work.”

48. Danilevskii, “Pustnye mnozhestvo ‘novoï khronologii,’” 16: “Serious scholar-historians prefer to pretend that the works of A. T. Fomenko, G. N. Nosovskii, and V. V. Kalashnikov [co-author of studies about Ptolomy’s *Almagest*] do not exist”; Volodikhin, “A Ia igrai na global’noi garmoshke,” in *Istoriia Rossii v melkii goroshek*, 181.

49. V. Makhotkin and M. Sushkov, “O manere otsylok k rabotam istorikov v ‘novoï khronologii’ akademika A. T. Fomenko (na primere ssylok na raboty R. G. Skrynnikova),” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 4, 62–65.

50. Volodikhin, “A Ia igrai na global’noi garmoshke,” 192, 180.

51. Andrei Smirnov, “Global’nyi sdvig,” *Rodina* 1997, no. 6: 21–23. He identifies several gross historical errors in Fomenko and Nosovskii, such as failure to distinguish Cossacks (*kazaki*) from Kazakhs (*kazakhi*).

52. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 17.

53. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 13 writes that the New Chronology “generated much amusement but also great controversy inside Russia.”

54. For summaries of the conference papers see I. A. Nastenka, “Myfi ‘novoï khronologii,’” in Ianin (ed.), *Mify ‘Novoi khronologii,’* 8–20 and D. M. Volodikhin, “Mify ‘Novoi khronologii’ akademika A. T. Fomenko,” *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 3–5.

55. See the edited transcription of the presentations and question-and-answer period taken from the Internet and published as “Khronologiiia Drevnei Rusi: pro et contra (Debaty v Sankt-Peterburge),” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 268–323. Nastenka reports the judgment of A. Zaidman, who attended, that this version was edited in favor of the New Chronology but still shows them “losing” the debate, which was also the opinion of the audience.

56. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Bibleiskaia Rus’*, 2: 553–74; idem, “O ‘novgorodskikh datirovakh’ A. A. Zalizniaka i V. L. Ianina,” in *Anti-istoriia*, 275–88; idem, “Razbor knig ‘Antifomenko’ i ‘Istorii i antiistoriia. Kritika ‘novoï khronologii’ akademika A. T. Fomenko’,” in “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” 337–64. On Fomenko and Nosovskii’s method of dealing with criticism see M. L. Gorodetskii, “Dvenadtsat’ metodov, ili O Kak by Razbore,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 2, 184–220, reprinted in “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” 210–27, 365–83. A. N. Medved’, “Kak khodit

Troianskii kon'? Kasparov otstal ot istorii," in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 2, 226–35, criticizes Kasparov and compares a debate between a scholar and a Fomenko supporter [note the implied dig at Fomenko's supporters for not being "scholars"] to watching a match in which one player is playing chess and the other checkers, each by his own rules. See Sheiko with Brown, *National Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 32.

57. A. A. Zalizniak, "Lingvistika po A. T. Fomenko," in *Anti-istoriia*, 173–324, here 180 n. 6 (this article was reprinted from *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 18–75, also in "Tak ono i okazalos'!" 73–120), wrote that he could not completely put aside the thought that Fomenko wrote an intentional, extreme farce of the humanities, a Mephistophelian antihumanities joke by a mathematician who thought the humanities could not differentiate parody from scholarly theory. A. L. Ponomarev, in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 221, refers to all Fomenko and Nosovskii's historical views as a parody against which it is virtually pointless to argue. For hysterically funny parodies of Fomenko and Nosovskii's methods see A. L. Khoroshkevich, "Novoe neizdannoe poslanie 'Sigismunda Gerbersteina'," in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 271–89. Mikhail Neborskii, "Ivan Groznyi byl zhenshchinoi! Kak rozhdaitsia istoricheskie mify," *Rodina* 1996, no. 5: 10–16, here 11–12, labels Fomenko and Nosovskii pseudohistorians and myth-makers. Answering his own question, should one laugh or cry at their views, Neborskii insists that one cannot argue with them seriously any more than one could with someone who claimed to be Napoleon. (Ivan IV does not reappear after the title, and Fomenko and Nosovskii never suggest that Ivan IV was a woman.); *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 2, 93–168, contains a dozen side-splitting parodies; *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 180–246, and *Antifomekovskaia mozaika* - 4, 118–28, another two. Dmitrii Oleinikov, "Global'nyi razrygrysh," *Rodina* 1997, no. 6: 20, writes that Fomenko lives by the aphorism (which he did not invent) that the more monstrous the lie, the sooner people will believe it, and concludes by rhetorically asking Fomenko whether he isn't frightened that some people have taken his April Fool's joke seriously.

58. Nosovskii and Fomenko, "Razbor knig 'Antifomenko' i 'Istorii i antiistoriia,'" 340, referring to Ianin.

59. S. P. Novikov, "Matematika i istoriia," in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 5–11, contains personal recollections of Fomenko's scholarly development by a senior mathematician.

60. R. M. Munchaev and E. N. Chernykh, "Dendrologicheskaiia shkola Novgoroda—samaia nadezhnaia v mire drevnostei," in *Anti-istoriia*, 289–92; A. Ivanov, "Zametki o metodakh datirovaniia," in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 336–45; Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 213–23. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 66 writes that Fomenko uses his prestige as a scientist to try to impugn carbon dating, which would contradict his extravagant theories.

61. A. A. Medyntseva, "Neudobnaia paleografia," in *Anti-istoriia*, 293–300.

62. Zalizniak, "Lingvistika po A. T. Fomenko," 173–224. See also Zalizniak, "Printsipy polemiki po A. T. Fomenko," in *Anti-istoriia*, 225–35, reprinted in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 326–35.

Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 199–210, concurs that Zalizniak’s criticism of Fomenko’s linguistics is definitive but falsely accuses him of idealizing dendrochronology.

63. On medieval and Russian history, Dmitrii Kharitonovich, “Fenomen Fomenko,” *Novyi mir* 1998, no. 3: 165–88, and idem, “Novaia khronologiiia: mezhdu neizbezhnym i nevozmozhnym (Polemicheskie zametki o metodologii istoricheskogo issledovaniia),” in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 245–73.

64. D. A. Drboglav, “Po proidennomu puti,” in *Istoriia i antiistoriia*, 217–19.

65. V. A. Bronshten, “N. A. Morozov—predtecha tvortsov ‘novoi khronologii’,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 144–53 (Bronshten also authored a satirical poem in which Fomenko winds up being diagnosed as paranoid and institutionalized: “Son Fomenko,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 244–46); V. A. Khrabrov, “N. A. Morozov - diletant-entsiklopedist,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 154–68; *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 136–53, from an Internet collective commentary moderated by M. L. Gorodetskii on Lecture 3 of Fomenko’s 1993 MGU abstract (*referat*) on the traditional chronology of Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

66. Khrabrov, “N. A. Morozov—diletant-entsiklopedist,” 165–66.

67. A. L. Vassoevich, “Po povodu stat’i M. M. Postnikova i ‘kul’turno-istoricheskikh’ publikatsii ego posledovatelei,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 179–97; A. Kh. Gorfunkel’, “O popytke zakryt’ istoriiu (otzyv o rabote M. M. Postnikova, *Vvedenie v kritiku drevnei khronologii*),” in *ibid.*, 198–216, republished from *Problemy vseмирnoi istorii. Sbornik statei v chest’ Aleksandra Aleksandrovicha Fursenko* (St. Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2000), 45–57.

68. *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 80, head-note to publication of an essay by Müller, 80–83.

69. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 97–142.

70. Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology* 4, 375–90.

71. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 23, does make that connection.

72. Diacu, a mathematician very proficient in astronomy, finds Fomenko, Nosovskii, and Kalashnikov at their best in dealing with astronomy and accepts Fomenko’s argumentation on Ptolemy’s *Almagest*, although not on Egyptian horoscopes. He concludes that Fomenko has raised some legitimate questions about the traditional chronology but that his work is very uneven, including, for example, blunders on linguistics, so that Fomenko does not present a convincing alternative (Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 97–144, 247–49, personal communication, e-mail, January 24, 2009). Diacu cites historical references to the *Almagest* from the fourth century and Latin translations from the ninth which to a historian would invalidate Fomenko’s dating of the text to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries altogether; but Diacu privileges astronomical and

mathematical evidence over historical in still accepting Fomenko's criticism, in part because of his less than stellar opinion of historians. Despite Diacu (239–41), good historians do not disregard evidence merely because it contradicts their conclusions, which is, as Diacu notes, exactly what Fomenko does. Although Diacu knows about the Carolingian Renaissance (182–83) he does not criticize his fellow Romanian émigré mathematician Tudor Ratiu or Fomenko-supporter Kasparov for their outdated prejudices about the “Dark Ages” (5–6, 15). To him, the “lost millennium” of his title is a metaphor, but to Ratiu and Kasparov, as in the New Chronology, it is real. Diacu writes that “neither historians nor scientists who rely on traditional chronology have reacted to these findings [on astronomy]” (Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 144). This assertion is contradicted by Russian-language scholarship on Fomenko, including an entire anthology, *Astronomiia protiv “Novoi khronologii,”* ed. I. A. Nastenka, comp. M. L. Gorodetskii (Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2001); Diacu does not read Russian. On early criticism of Fomenko's use of astronomy, see below on Iurii Zaviniagin.

73. Diacu concurs, finding Fomenko's statistical methodology and dynastic dualism unreliable. He makes a particularly strong case against Fomenko's dismissal of biography in making his identifications of duplicate popes (Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 163–86).

74. Laruelle, *Euphemizing Antisemitism*.

75. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 129.

76. L. V. Milov, “K voprosu o podlinnosti Radzivillovskoi letopisi (O tak nazivaemoi versii A. T. Fomenko),” in *Anti-istoriia*, 248–74, reprinted in *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 12–28; Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 42–66; and “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” 130–53; A. Rabyalka, “Issledovanie tak nazyvaemoi ‘poddelki’ v Povesti vremennykh let” with an appendix, “A. Shakhmatov o Povesti vremennykh let,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika - 4*, 8–44; and D. M. Volodikhin, “Radzivillovskaia letopis’ i ‘novaia khronologiiia,’” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika - 4*, 255–67.

77. Munchaev and Chernykh, “Dendrologicheskaiia shkola Novgoroda—samaia nadezhnaia v mire drevnostei,” 289–92.

78. Zalizniak, “Lingvistika po A. T. Fomenko,” 173–224.

79. Citing some of Fomenko and Nosovskii's supporters, Sheiko writes that according to Fomenko and his supporters the “Russians” were a source of Gumilev's “*passionarnost*” (“vibrant exuberance”) that led to the Viking era, the opposite of the Normanist notion that the Vikings inspired the Rus’ Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 142, but Sheiko then asserts that neither professional nor amateur historians endorsed this concept, *ibid.*, 181.

80. V. A. Kuchkin, “Novootkrytaia bitva Tokhtamysha Ivanovicha Donskogo (on zhe Dmitrii Tuikhodzhaevich Moskovskii) s Mamaev (maminym synom) na Moskovskikh Kulizhkakh,” in *Anti-istoriia*, 236–47, reprinted in *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 2000, no. 4: 9–16, *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 9–16, Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 30–41, and “*Tak*

ono i okazalos'!" 175–80; Petrov, "Progulka po frontovoi Moskve s Mamaem, Tokhtamyshe i Fomenko," 131–90; Sergei Fatiushkin, "Fomenko na Kulikovom pole," in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 4, 45–61; Sheiko with Brown, *National Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 197–205.

81. Charles J. Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: The Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Donald Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols: Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1547* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Charles J. Halperin, "Omissions of National Memory: Russian Historiography on the Golden Horde as Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion," *Ab Imperio* 2004, no. 3: 131–44.

82. Sheiko first emphasizes the convergence of newer Russian and Western revisionist scholarship on the issue of the Mongol conquest of Russia, Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 27, and then notes that the preponderance of Russian historiography retains the traditional negative assessment of the Mongol impact, *ibid.*, 253–54, which remains the dominant paradigm in the West as well. In other words, minorities of historians in Russia and the West have reappraised the role of the Mongols in Russian history.

83. Begunov, *Antifomenko*, 22–70.

84. E. A. Eliseev, "Arabskie nadpisi na starom russkom oruzhii XVI–XVII vekov," in Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Issledovaniia 1999–2000 godov*, 515–46; Fomenko and Nosovskii, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, 354–402.

85. Sheiko writes that the Russian public thinks there was something wrong with the "Mongol conquest," and therefore is receptive to Fomenko and Nosovskii's argument that it never happened. Sheiko with Brown, *National Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 155. Sheiko misquotes Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 31, which asserted that Russia, not Kievan Rus', was too close to the steppe for its own good. In evaluating how the Tatars of the Juchid ulus could have mobilized such huge armies, Sheiko with Brown, *National Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 180–85, Sheiko neglects the simplest explanation that the numbers he is quoting are vastly exaggerated. Sheiko does not know that notwithstanding Russian source descriptions of the "multitudes" of Tatars, smaller armies of nomadic archers could always defeat larger armies of infantry or mounted knights.

86. This "fact" may be a perversion of Simeon Bekbulatovich's accession in 1575, which is very confused. Ivan may have "installed" Simeon but there was no coronation ceremony.

87. V. L. Ianin, "'Ziiaiuschie vysoty' akademika Fomenko," 87–96.

88. Sheiko with Brown, *National Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 213–32, betrays Sheiko's very limited command of the history of the reign of Ivan the Terrible. There was no "boyar bloodbath" during Ivan's reign; the boyar clans as a whole survived and retained their influence. The real Ivan died before the *oprichnina* only if we accept one of Fomenko and Nosovskii's dates of his death, 1557, but not their equally unjustified alternative, 1589. The assertion that

“In reality, Ivan the Terrible has not experienced a particularly bad press in Russia, except for the liberal minority who saw continuity between this tsar and Stalin” overlooks the most dominant negative evaluation of Ivan of the nineteenth century, well before Stalin, namely Karamzin, a conservative, and even “minority” “liberals” like Kostomarov and Kluchevskii did not need Stalin to criticize Ivan. Sheiko’s assertion badly oversimplifies even judgments of Ivan during and after Stalin’s time. It is very doubtful that Anastasiia was poisoned. There are more than a few documents extant from Ivan’s reign. *Izbrannaia Rada* should be translated as “Chosen Council” or “chosen councilors,” but not “Council of Trustees.” The “usual explanation” of Ivan’s second coronation in 1572 is not that Ivan was so insecure that he needed constant reassurance of his status because there is *no* “usual explanation” because there was *no* second coronation. At most Ivan had seven, not eight, wives and the document in which the Russian Orthodox Church gave Ivan dispensation to marry for the fourth time, despite canon law, has survived. Vasilii Blazhennyi cannot have been buried in 1552 in the Trinity-Sergius Monastery on Red Square because the monastery is in Zagorsk. Sheiko omits any discussion of the Judaizer role during Ivan’s reign, which impairs his judgment of the anti-Semitism of the New Chronology.

89. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’,” 342–87; Brodskii, “Akademik s zheleznym posokhom,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* [1], 60–63.

90. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’,” 328.

91. M. Iu. Sokolov, “Udovol’sstvie byt’ sirotoi,” 76–81.

92. G. A. Koshelenko and L. P. Marinovich, “Lysenkovshchina, fomenkovshchina—dalee vezde?” in Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 67–126, here 67 (this article discusses other pseudohistorians but is concerned with ancient, Byzantine, and medieval, not Russian, history).

93. It would be gratuitous to raise the question of how Fomenko and Nosovskii can afford the New Chronology’s prolific publication and other activities. Publishing innumerable books in large press runs at high prices generates so much income that outside funding would be superfluous.

94. Archimandrite Ioann N. Ekonomtsev, “Tol’ko li khronologii?” in *Anti-istoriia*, 301–07, here 306. The author is president of the Department of Catechesis and Religious Education of the Russian Orthodox Church and rector of the St. Apostle John the Theologian Russian Orthodox University.

95. Volodikhin, “A Ia igra na global’noi garmoshke,” 178–92; Dmitrii Volodikhin, “Anatolii Fomenko—terminator russkoi istorii,” in *Russkaia istoriia v melkii goroshek*, 193–222. This volume also contains Edvard Radzinskii’s study of Catherine the Great and Nikolai Shakhmagonov’s on Potemkin. Volodikhin calls these authors “monsters” (Volodikhin, “Dva slova o monstrakh,” 4). Neborskii, “Ivan Groznyi byl zhenshchينوi,” 10–16, also discusses Fomenko in the context of the *Vlesova kniga*, Gumilev, and Adzhiev.

96. A. I. Nastenka, "Mify 'novoi khronologii,'" in Ianin (ed.), *Mify "Novoi khronologii,"* 17, an abstract of Volodikhin's paper MGU Conference paper. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 13, n. 5, lists over twenty additional alternative historians.
97. Brodskii, "Akademik s zheleznym posokhom," 62. On Carl Becker's famous presidential address to the American Historical Association in 1931, "Everyman His Own Historian," as perhaps a spoof see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Mr. Everyman Buys Coal," *Perspectives on History: Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association* 47, no. 6 (September 2009): 3–4.
98. Even Evgeny Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History: Museum of the Revolution*, tr. Sarah Young (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), after writing that "totalitarian society is based on a conspiratorial view of the world" (195) adds that "traditionalism and antimodernism are the true domain of conspiratorial thinking. . . . For the paranoid, traditionalistic consciousness, reality is a constructed system, a machine in which there is no place for unconscious motives, accidents, or unpremeditated acts. Everything 'bad' turns out to be part of a conspiracy" (196).
99. Kradin, "'Stateless Head,'" 120 n. 1, after calling Fomenko a mathematician and "self-proclaimed historian," attributes the popularity of his books to the same reason that Lev Gumilev's books sold well: "Generally speaking, reference to a "world conspiracy" increase book sales."
100. Ianin, "Otkrytiia ne proizoshlo (Vmesto predisloviia)," in Ianin (ed.), *Mify "Novoi khronologii,"* 3–7, here 5.
101. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 236. On Neo-Eurasianism see Marlène Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*, tr. Mischa Gabowitsch (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).
102. S. O. Shmidt, "Ot redaktora," in *Anti-istoriia*, 7. See Evgenii Gabovich, "Fomenko ne odinok. Kritika revizii istorii v Zapadnoi Evrope," by a New Chronology sympathizer, in Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Issledovaniia 1999–2000 godov*, 573–600.
103. New Chronology web-sites now come in a variety of foreign languages. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 18.
104. Jason Colavito, "Who Lost the Middle Ages? What's behind the attempt to impose a "New Chronology" on history?" jcolavito.tripod.com/lostcivilizations/id13.html, accessed January 8, 2009. Colavito recounts that Fomenko's English-language publisher, Delamere Resources, Ltd., responded to hostile criticism of Fomenko by offering \$10,000 to anyone who could prove that human artifacts pre-dated the eleventh century CE without using archeology, dendrochronology, carbon-14 dating, or any of the scientific techniques Fomenko dismisses. Similarly, the back cover of Fomenko and Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4*, carries an offer from the publisher of \$10,000 US "to the first person who will not only declare but prove consistently, with adequate methods and in sufficient detail on the same or better academic level that the New Chronology theory" is wrong. The credibility of this offer speaks for itself.

105. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’,” 341.
106. Brodskii, “Akademik s zheleznym posokhom,” 60.
107. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 25 (goal), 22, 12.
108. See what might be an expression of Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet skepticism toward history in Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema*, 112, discussing why literature has more “historical” credibility than history: “The literary classics, unlike any other form of historical narrative—textbooks (which can easily be rewritten), documents (which can be forged), interpretations (which can be repeatedly revised), statistics (which are easily falsified) and so on—enjoy the status of unconditional authenticity, specifically by virtue of being pure fiction. This assertion holds particularly true for Russian and Soviet literocentric culture.”
109. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 32–33. It might be noted that Diacu grew up in a “totalitarian” Communist regime (Romania under Ceausescu) which distorted history (Diacu, *The Lost Millennium*, 13, 16). This experience might also play a role in Diacu’s sympathy for Fomenko.
110. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 234, 28.
111. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’,” 324.
112. This narrative implies that Fomenko was a Party member.
113. V. A. Khrabrov, “Iu. A. Zaviniagin i ego pis’ma po povody ‘novoi khronologii’,” in *Astronomiia protiv “Novoi khronologii”*, 297–309; Volodikhin, “Mify “Novoi khronologii” akademika A. T. Fomenko,” 4 (a summary of unpublished fragments of Khrabrov’s MGU conference paper).
114. Sheikov with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 94. Sheiko does not document this incident which is not otherwise mentioned in the other literature I have consulted.
115. S. P. Novikov, “Matematika i istoriia,” 8.
116. S. Tikhvinskii, “Sovetskaia istoricheskaiia nauka v preddver’ii XXVII s’ezd KPSS,” *Kommunist* 1986, no. 1: 95–107.
117. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 272–73.
118. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 33, 85–88, 96, 205. Unfortunately, Sheiko exaggerates popular acceptance in the West of a conception of history as open to various interpretations.
119. Sheiko does not deal with these accusations.

120. Zalizniak, “Lingvistika po A. T. Fomenko,” 222.

121. Iu. K. Begunov, *Tainye sily v istorii Rossii. Sbornik statei i dokumentov*, 4th expanded ed. (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo gazety “Patriot,” 2000), which also contains a hatchet-job on D. S. Likhachev as a Jew, a Mason, a cosmopolitan, a believer in democracy, a tool of the Soros Fund, and a mediocre scholar (493–517). Had Likhachev deigned to write about the New Chronology he would have been just as sincere a critic as Begunov.

122. Volodikhin, “Fenomen folk-istori,” in Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 177–89, also in *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 2000, no. 4: 16–24. See also D. M. Volodikhin, ““Novaia Khronologiia” kak avangard fol’k istorii,” *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 50–57. By “folk history” Volodikhin probably means amateur popular history.

123. Fomenko and Nosovskii, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology* 4, 510.

124. This is not the only case in which the post-Soviet Russian academic establishment indulged in the kind of unprofessional polemic too often characteristic of Soviet scholarship (versus A. Zimin on the “Tale of the Host of Igor’,” Edward Keenan on the Ivan-Kurbskii Correspondence). Aleksandr Filiushkin tried not only to impugn Edward Keenan’s conclusions about the “Tale of the Host of Igor’” but also and impermissibly his motives for questioning the authenticity of a “sacred text” of Russian culture; see A. I. Filiushkin, ““Slovo . . .” so slezami smeshannoe: Kak genial’nuui drevnerusskuii poemu pytaliis’ ob”iavit’ poddelkoi,” *Rodina: Rossiiskii istoricheskii zhurnal*, 2002, no. 11/12: 185–88; idem, “Piskhopaticheskoe (sic) unichtozhenie ‘Slova o polku Igoreve’: Retsenziia na neizdannuii knigu Edvarda Kinana,” *Logos: Zhurnal po filosofii i pragmatike kul’tury*, 2002, No. 2: 24–32.

125. Charles J. Halperin, “George Vernadsky, Eurasianism, the Mongols, and Russia,” *Slavic Review* 41, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 477–93; idem, “Russia and the Steppe: George Vernadsky and Eurasianism,” *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* 36 (1985): 55–194; Marlène Laruelle, *L’idéologie eurasiste russe ou comment penser l’empire* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999); Dmitrii Sidorov, “Post-Imperial Third Rome: Resurrection of a Russian Orthodox Geopolitical Metaphor,” *Geopolitics* 11 no. 2 (2006): 317–47, here 336–37. According to James H Billington, *Russia In Search of Itself* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wils on Center Press; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), chap. 4, “The Authoritarian Alternative: Eurasianism,” 67–94, here 82–84, the New Chronology could be “a peculiar reincarnation” or a “far right version” of Eurasianism.

126. This is why one would not expect affinities between the New Chronology and the non-Russian Neo-Eurasianisms in Tatarstan, Kazakhstan, and Turkey discussed by Laruelle, *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*.

127. Laruelle, *Euphemizing Antisemitism*.

128. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 16–17, 59–61, 234.

129. Billington, *Russia in Search of Itself*, 82, writes that Fomenko and Nosovskii “seem to have embraced” Russia’s “autocratic Asian political culture,” but his linking of autocracy and Asia has a whiff of Karl Wittfogel’s theory of Oriental Despotism and is contradicted by recent research on the consensual and collegial elements of the political culture of the Mongol Empire. Moreover Fomenko and Nosovskii never endorse autocracy or authoritarianism in their publications. Without presenting evidence Billington also links Fomenko and Nosovskii to the xenophobic and authoritarian nationalism of the anti-Semitic Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Ladoga, Ioann (Snychev), who is revered by one of Fomenko and Nosovskii’s critics, Begunov. Metropolitan Ioann was the godfather of the movement of extreme Orthodox, chauvinist, monarchist anti-Semites to persuade the Russian Orthodox Church to canonize Ivan the Terrible. Metropolitan Ioann and the participants in that movement assigned a role to Russian Orthodoxy in Russian history which is hardly compatible with the New Chronology. However, there is a point of convergence between the New Chronology and Metropolitan Ioann’s views of the reign of Ivan IV, anti-Semitism, discussed below. Fomenko and Nosovskii, of course, resided in Moscow, not St. Petersburg, during Metropolitan Ioann’s tenure.

130. For that reason, assertions that there are echoes of the New Chronology in Russian fascist thought strike me as excessive, despite Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 94–95.

131. Despite Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 19–20, 23–25. Sheiko sees Fomenko’s apolitical stance as a facade and imputes to the New Chronology the explicit political goal of facilitating the maintenance of an imperial consciousness in Russia. Sheiko sees the New Chronology very much in the manner Edward Said attributed to “Orientalism,” seemingly objective scholarship serving imperialist aims.

132. Laruelle justifiably did not mention Fomenko or the New Chronology in *Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire*.

133. Konstantin Sheiko, “‘Lomonosov’s Bastards’: Anatolii Fomenko, pseudo-history and Russia’s search for a post-Communist identity,” PhD dissertation, University of Wollongong, 2004 [accessible on-line at <http://www.library.uow.edu.au/adt-NWU/public/adt-NWU20050120.113353/index.html> (abstract with a link to the pdf version of the entire dissertation) or <http://www.library.uow.edu.au/adt-NWU/uploads/approved/adt-NWU20050120.113353/public/02Whole.pdf> (directly to dissertation)], 4. He did not indicate then when or by whom or provide any documentation. He now explains: “We may have made our point sound more exciting than it in fact is or was. As far as I know, there was no official church anathema or declaration directed against Fomenko and New Chronology. Living in Russia in the 1990s, I often heard church figures and historians debating these issues on television and radio and the virulent anti-Fomenkoism of some of these characters led to words like Antichrist being used often. When I told my supervisor this, he thought that we should make this point in the thesis” (personal communication, e-mail, January 15, 2009).

134. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 16.

135. Sheiko, personal communication, e-mail, 10 January 2009, kindly provided me with these URLs: http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/History/laushkin/index.php; <http://fatus.chat.ru/foma.html>; and http://www.pravoslavie.ru/press/ao_sonrazuma1.htm. See also Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 95–96.

136. See in general the unfootnoted essay by Vadim Chernyi, “Teologiiia protiv Nosovskogo i Fomenko,” in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 4, 66–80, as well as A. Kh. Gorfunkel’, “Evangelie ot Fomenko,” unpublished essay. I wish to thank Aleksandr Khaimovich Gorfunkel’ for providing me with this essay and for permission to cite it.

137. G. A. Eliseev, “Khristianstvo i ‘novaia khronologiiia’,” in Ianin (ed.), *Mify “Novoi khronologii,”* 190–203, reprinted in *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia* 2000, no. 3: 42–50, and in “*Tak ono i okazalos’!*” 162–74.

138. Zhurinskaia, “Son razuma porozhdaet chudovishch,” an extensive summary of the 1999 MGU conference from a Russian Orthodox Christian point of view.

139. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’,” 339–40, on works by Khodakovskii, Davydenko, and Bulychev to which I do not have access.

140. Laruelle, *Euphemizing Antisemitism*.

141. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 72–73.

142. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiiia*, 486–89.

143. Medyntseva, “Neudobnaia paleografiia,” 339.

144. Samson: G. V. Nosovskii and A. T. Fomenko. *Rekonstrutsiia vseobshchei istorii. Zhanna d’Ark, Samson i russkaia istoriia*, 87–116; Esther: idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus’* 1: 421–64; Judith: idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus’* 1: 465–82.

145. Charles J. Halperin, “Would You Believe *Saint* Ivan the Terrible? Reforming the Image of Tsar Ivan IV,” *Symposion*, forthcoming.

146. The extreme Russian Orthodox advocates of canonizing Ivan have no quarrel with Ivan’s anti-Jewish actions, including in Polotsk, and therefore would not share Fomenko and Nosovskii’s desire to distance the “true” Ivan IV from such atrocities born of bigotry.

147. Fomenko and Nosovskii, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiiia*, 104.

148. Volodikhin, “Mify “Novoi khronologii” akademika A. T. Fomenko,” 4.

149. Brodskii, “Akademik s zheleznym posokhom,” 62, refers to the wars of physicists and lyric poets in the 1960s. See C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (New York:

Cambridge University Press, 1963), and *The Two Cultures and A Second Look* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

150. R. A. Nelepin, "Preface," in Begunov, *Antifomenko*, 6; [Iarin] "Otkrytiia ne proizoshlo (Vmesto predisloviia)," 5.

151. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 13 notes that many alternative historians inspired by Fomenko are also former scientists, which says nothing about the readers of the New Chronology.

152. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 26, 94, 205.

153. Vladimir Berezin, "Azhiotazhnaia istoriia," in *Antifomenkovskaia mozaika* - 3, 248–54. Witch-hunts were more characteristic of early modern than medieval history, but "medieval" here is something of a generic pejorative for pre-Renaissance and/or modern times. Ostrowski, "Foreword," 19 refers to Fomenko's "gullible audience."

154. Sheiko with Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past*, 20.

Who Was Not Ivan the Terrible, Who Ivan the Terrible Was Not

Abstract

The New Chronology's contention that "Ivan IV" is really a composite of four rulers is science fiction, but legitimate scholars have also proposed that Ivan had multiple identities to resolve contradictions and shed more light upon Ivan's reign. However, newer attempts to attribute multiple names to Ivan and to ascribe literary alter egos to him are as unconvincing as earlier theories that Ivan's reign was divided into "good" and "bad" phases or the more recent contention that Ivan's writings are seventeenth-century apocrypha. There was one and only one Ivan the Terrible, and one is more than enough.

“Two, Three, Many Ivan the Terribles”¹

In their reconstruction of Russian history called the New Chronology, which is from the point of view of historical scholarship quite worthless, Moscow mathematicians Anatolii Fomenko and Gleb Nosovskii confront the difficult reign of Ivan the Terrible head on.² They begin by describing “traditional” historiography about Ivan as contradictory and confusing. The current depiction of Ivan’s reign, Fomenko and Nosovskii opine, is one of the “most obscure” (*temnoe*) in Russian history.³ Both characterizations are undoubtedly true. Fomenko and Nosovskii concede that if all the actions of the ruler of Russia from 1533 to 1584 had been taken by one man then that man must certainly have been schizophrenic.⁴ But Fomenko and Nosovskii do not contend that Ivan was insane because they claim that “Ivan the Terrible” is actually a composite of four individuals who were given the “throne name” “Ivan IV” in the rewriting of Russian history undertaken by the Romanov dynasty in the seventeenth century to cover up the history not only of Ivan’s reign, but of the Russian World Empire suppressed from memory by ascribing it to the Mongols. The first Ivan IV, son of Vasiliï III, abdicated in 1553 after his severe illness left him mentally incompetent. He was succeeded by his son (the first) Tsarevich Dmitrii, who did not die in 1553 but ruled until his death in 1563.⁵ Tsarevich Dmitrii was succeeded by his brother Tsarevich Ivan, who was compelled to resign in 1575, although he had been forced to relinquish power in 1572. He was succeeded by the last “Ivan IV,” the converted Tatar Chingisid Simeon Bekbulatovich, probably the son of Ivan III. Fomenko and Nosovskii assert that these fantasies “explain” the twists and turns of “Ivan IV’s” reign, because changes in policy, such as the introduction and termination of the *oprichnina* terror, actually reflected changes in the ruler.

Of course the Fomenko and Nosovskii schema that four rulers were retrospectively assigned the “throne name” Ivan IV is total nonsense. Given the astonishing popularity of the New Chronology in Russia and the amount of energy professional historians have expended in refuting its misconceptions, it is surprising that no historian in Russia specializing in Ivan’s reign, of which there are a plenitude, has taken the time to address the infinity of factual errors committed by Fomenko and Nosovskii concerning Ivan. Sigurd Shmidt wrote that after studying Ivan for more than sixty years he could write such a critique⁶ but apparently he never did. Iurii Begunov, unlike Shmidt neither a historian nor a specialist on Ivan IV, did attempt such a critique but his results were decidedly mixed.⁷ Outside Russia Konstantin Sheiko summarizes Fomenko and Nosovskii’s theory of Ivan as a composite very

well, but his lack of expertise on sixteenth-century Muscovite history seriously mars his commentary.⁸

Fomenko and Nosovskii ignore or distort much academic scholarship on Ivan. By arguing that the *oprichnina* was directed against the boyars Fomenko and Nosovskii ignore recent scholarship which has impugned that interpretation.⁹ Their assertion that the boyars were centered in the “old” capital of Iaroslavl’ and surrounding cities is probably a distortion of Ruslan Skrynnikov’s identification of the Suzdal’ princely elite, both boyars and gentry, as the object of the first phase of the *oprichnina*. And yet Fomenko and Nosovskii’s amateur presentation of the reign of Ivan is not totally divorced from professional expositions of that reign. Unfortunately like even some professional historians, all Fomenko and Nosovskii are earnestly trying to do is accommodate contradictory data from Ivan’s reign to match their own prejudices and preconceptions about how a “true” Russian tsar should act. The New Chronology raises denial of Ivan’s contradictory nature to the ultimate level by denying that the “real” Ivan did anything of which they disapprove. The multiple Ivans permit them to avoid reconciling Ivan’s ever-changing policies, a challenge that led Skrynnikov to argue that the *oprichnina* alone underwent four phases, in each of which Ivan pursued different policies aided by different political allies against different political enemies.¹⁰ Some specialists view Skrynnikov’s analysis as not much more satisfactory than Fomenko and Nosovskii’s, but Skrynnikov’s insistence that the *oprichnina* did not have a single consistent content reflects the same dilemma of contradictory evidence that animates Fomenko and Nosovskii’s science fiction.

The undeniable fact that many contemporary and subsequent historical sources about Ivan’s reign do omit details which would contradict their political tendentiousness enables Fomenko and Nosovskii to propose their outlandish theory about Ivan. Nevertheless there is no way to extrapolate a credible concept of a composite Ivan from those sources save by capricious, arbitrary, and unsound creative writing. The first Tsarevich Dmitrii, Tsarevich Ivan, and Simeon Bekbulatovich were not Ivan the Terrible. Nevertheless, the dichotomy proposed by Fomenko and Nosovskii in the images of Ivan between the “real” reconstructed Ivan and the “invented” Ivan of Romanov historiography (which Fomenko and Nosovskii concede remains dominant in Russia) can profitably be situated within the context of other theories of Ivan’s multiple identities.

While the parallel between the New Chronology’s approach to Ivan’s reign and some works of professional historians and literary specialists which impute multiple identities to Ivan is intriguing, it must be emphasized that Fomenko and

Nosovskii's works exist in a separate sphere of thought outside the confines of legitimate scholarship. It would be a great insult to equate the other authors discussed here, beginning with Skrynnikov, to Fomenko and Nosovskii. Rather, the same approach to Ivan's reign—multiple identities of one sort or another, generated by the same contradictory and limited source base—has been used in both illegitimate and legitimate ways. The conclusions of the New Chronology embody a fictitious and absurd incarnation of the multiple-identity approach which no serious scholar could regard as a contribution to the study of Ivan's reign. The other authors whose views are analyzed here present thoroughly professional and serious conclusions with which one may agree or disagree, but always within the parameters of scholarly discourse. Legitimate attempts to apply a multiple-identity paradigm to Ivan put the illegitimate fantasies of the New Chronology about Ivan into context, but the substantively worthless ideas of Fomenko and Nosovskii cannot impugn the worthwhile efforts of various scholars to enhance our knowledge of the reign of Ivan via a variety of multiple-identity devices. The New Chronology merely provides a helpful segue from pseudo-scholarship to genuine scholarship about Ivan.

Ivan IV's Multiple Identities

There have always been dichotomies in the image of Ivan the Terrible, beginning in his own lifetime. In Muscovy during his reign Ivan was the God-crowned, God-chosen, God-anointed autocrat, fountainhead of justice and piety, but in war propaganda, the famous Flugschriften, generated in Poland, Livonia, and Germany by the Livonian War (1558–1582); in scurrilous pamphlets by the Germans Heinrich von Staden, Johann Taube, and Elert Kruse, and Albert Schlichting, who had all served Ivan and then defected; and in the works of the émigré Russian boyar Prince Andrei Mikhailovich Kurbskii, Ivan was a monstrous despot and tyrant. These contradictory images persisted into modern historiography.¹¹ On the one hand Ivan's apologists exalt him as the progressive centralizer of Muscovy, the reformer and statesman—a view that reached its politicized apex in the Stalinist cult of Ivan. On the other hand, confronted with the task of making sense of the actions of (a single) Ivan, more than one historian has taken the path of least resistance and concluded that Ivan's reign does not make sense because Ivan did not make sense. He is dismissed as at least paranoid if not an insane sociopath. Of course, to Fomenko and Nosovskii those actions were taken by four men, none of whom was insane. Unfortunately, the insanity theory of Ivan explains nothing.¹²

Historians have not failed to distinguish between what they think is the “true” Ivan from “false” images of Ivan. Edward Keenan unconvincingly created the “Pseudo-Ivan,” the invented author of apocryphal epistles from the seventeenth century that were attributed to the (true) Ivan who was illiterate at least in Slavonic if not also in Chancery Russian.¹³ Fomenko and Nosovskii take some cognizance of this theory but contradictorily write both that “Ivan’s” letters were authentic but revised in the seventeenth century and that Kurbskii’s First Epistle was written by Semen Shakhovskoi in the seventeenth century, a second-hand allusion to an early conclusion of the unnamed Keenan.¹⁴ There is no way in the sixteenth century that Ivan could have written a response to Kurbskii’s First Epistle if Kurbskii’s letter were not written until the seventeenth century! The advocates of Ivan’s canonization contrast the “true” Ivan, a pious martyr for Russia and opponent of Jewish influence, with the “myth” of Ivan created by hostile Westerners and their Russian flunkies.¹⁵ However, some of the source dichotomies underlying these conceptions of a “true” and “false” Ivan can be mitigated by underlying convergences. “The personality of Ivan described in the travel accounts—the playful, capricious, mercurial, strong-willed tsar, whether as sadistic tyrant or impartial, stern judge—is identical to the literary *persona* who wrote Ivan’s First Epistle to Kurbskij.”¹⁶

But in addition to contrasts between Ivan’s image in contemporary sources and subsequent historiography, there are also biographical theories of “two Ivans,” that is, narratives which portray Ivan as having changed drastically during his lifetime. The first such theory, which contrasted the “good” Ivan of the late 1540s and 1550s and the “bad” Ivan of the 1560s until his death, also arose during Ivan’s lifetime, in Kurbsky’s “History of the Grand Prince of Moscow,”¹⁷ and was continued soon after Ivan’s death in Paul Oderborn¹⁸ and the early seventeenth-century “Chronograph” (*Khronograf*).¹⁹ Nikolai Karamzin’s Two Ivans was the most widely disseminated theory of Ivan’s reign in nineteenth-century Russia and continues to exert a significant influence on contemporary Russian and Western scholarship, although its interpretation of the roles of the gentry official Aleksei Adashev and the priest Sylvester of the “Chosen Council” (*Izbrannaia rada*) has been subject to considerable criticism in modern scholarship.²⁰ In these theories the “two Ivans” are metaphorical, that is, there was only one Ivan who changed, a change most often attributed to the death of his first wife Tsaritsa Anastasiia Iur’eva-Zakhar’ina.

Another version of multiple Ivans applies to his literary compositions. As a writer Ivan assumed pseudonyms. Scholars have proposed most convincingly that Ivan was ghostwriter of at least three of the four Muscovite boyar replies to the invitation to defect issued by King Sigismund Augustus of Poland-Lithuania.²¹ Dmitrii

Likhachev argued less convincingly that Ivan authored a Canon to the Archangel Michael under the pseudonym “Turii the Holy Fool” (*Iurodivyi*).²² Daniil Al’shits least convincingly nominated Ivan as the anonymous author of the interpolations in the “Tsar’s Book” (*Tsarstvennaia kniga*) chronicle about Ivan’s illness in 1553.²³ It should be noted that Likhachev’s and Alshits’s attributions retain some popularity among scholars. Again in this case there is actually only one Ivan who assumed different pen names depending upon varying circumstance.

There are two additional and unconvincing attempts to expand our knowledge of Ivan’s reign via concepts of multiple identities which have not previously been critiqued in scholarship. The first theory, by Anna Litvina and Fedor Uspenskii, holds that Ivan had more than one name. The second theory suggests that Ivan had literary alter egos, characters in current tales who were perceived by the Muscovite literate public to be Ivan, according to Rufina Dmitrieva Petr in the “Tale of Peter and Fevroniia,” and to Ivan Zabelin, Irina Lebedeva, and Vadim Koretskii Ioasaf in “The Tale of Varlaam and Ioasaf.” Let me repeat that the conclusions of these scholars, regardless of whether one agrees with them, cannot be found “guilty by association” via the parallel between their views of Ivan’s multiple identities and those of Fomenko and Nosovskii, self-proclaimed historians thoroughly deficient in historical training and ethics. However, this essay contends that although their applications of the concept of multiple identity represent legitimate scholarly research, their conclusions are not convincing.

An Ivan the Terrible By Any Other Name

After St. Vladimir’s conversion to Christianity from “paganism,” Kievan Rus’ princes bore both pagan and Christian names. If they took the cowl they also acquired a monastic name, usually one beginning with the same letter as their Christian name. Thus on his deathbed although not necessarily before he died, Ivan IV, Ioann in Slavonic, was shorn with the name Iona. Therefore the notion of a prince with more than one name is in itself eminently reasonable.

In a stimulating and original monograph Litvina and Uspenskii go further. They argue that once the pagan name dropped out of princely practice, princes were instead given two Christian names, a public, official, baptismal name and a private, intimate, personal, calendar name for use in church and family life. The nonpublic “exotic” names created the possibility of cultural games, puzzles, and ambivalence. Litvina and Uspenskii apply their theory to Ivan. They reject one nonpublic name

which has been attributed to Ivan, Varus (Uar), but assign two new nonpublic names to him, Titus (Tit) and Smaragdus (Smaragd, “The Pearl”).²⁴

Varus is the name of an early Christian martyr from Alexandria, Egypt, during the reign of the Emperor Maximilian. Karamzin utilized a manuscript of the “Kazan History” (*Kazanskaia istoriia*) about Ivan’s conquest of Kazan’ in 1552 which contains a notation on the birth in 7091 (1582) of the second Tsarevich Dmitrii of Uglich stating that Dmitrii’s “primary name” (*priamoe imia*) was Varus,²⁵ which Litvina and Uspenskii speculate may also have been true of his namesake, the first Tsarevich Dmitrii.²⁶ Karamzin defined “primary name” as the name of the saint whose memory was celebrated on the day of the birth of a child but he provides no justification for this interpretation.²⁷ Karamzin did *not* apply the name Varus to Ivan. Without citing Karamzin or providing any other reference, Olga Podobedova wrote that Ivan was called Varus. This assertion, Litvina and Uspenskii insist, was erroneous.²⁸

The “Book of Degrees” (*Stepennaia kniga*), a history of the Daniilovich dynasty from St. Vladimir to the reign of Ivan IV structured around “degrees” devoted to specific rulers, records that before Ivan’s birth on August 25, 7039, Grand Princess Elena, Ivan’s mother, asked the “holy fool” (*iurodiv*) Domen’tii, What will I give birth to? and he answered, the Apostle Titus (Tit) because of his “wide mind” (*shirokii um*).²⁹ Titus was Ivan’s unofficial name, probably not his baptismal name. Even if Ivan was not named for that saint he was never entirely separated from the name Titus.³⁰ Two pieces of artistic evidence testify to Ivan’s reverence for the Apostle Titus. An image of the Apostle Titus can be found on the back of the gold setting (*oprava*) of a chest medallion (*panagiia*) which belonged to Ivan.³¹ On the elaborate frame (*oklad*) which Ivan had fashioned for Andrei Rublev’s icon of the Trinity and then donated to the Trinity–St. Sergius Monastery, one of the niello circular medallions contained an image of the Apostle Titus as Ivan’s baptismal name-saint.³² Ivan was born on August 25, the date of the translation of the relics of Saints Titus and Bartholomew, but he was named for John the Baptist who was beheaded on August 29. On the whole the name Titus was relegated socially to the periphery. Vasilii III gave his eldest son the name Ioann, the same name as Vasilii III’s father Grand Prince Ivan III and uncle Prince Ivan Molodoi, both deceased, and the same patron saint as the boy’s grandfather Ivan III.³³

An anonymous laud (*pokhval’noe slovo*) to Grand Prince Vasilii III records the birth of Vasilii’s first son who was baptized Ivan Smaragdus (*Zmaragd*), the name of two saints in the Orthodox calendar.³⁴ Smaragdus, honored on March 9 and June 7, was a member of the Forty Sebastia martyrs, and Evfronsiia-Smaragdus of Alexandria, honored September 25 and February 15, was a Roman martyr. It is

unclear if Smaragdus is a name or a nickname. Moreover the dates do not work since Ivan was born in August, not March, not June, not September, not February. There is no known tie between this name and either the miscellany called *Izmaragd* (The Pearl) or Princess Evfrosiniia-Izmaragd Rostislavna, named in honor of Efrosiniia-Smaragdus of Alexandria.³⁵ Smaragdus was the pseudonym of Saint Efrosiniia of Alexandria when she entered a monastery as a man, glossed as “precious stone.”³⁶ Litvina and Uspenskii conclude their treatment of Ivan’s names by declaring that Ivan was known to his contemporaries as Ioann *Groznyi* (“Ivan the Terrible”) whereas the names Titus and Smaragdus are found only in isolated texts from the period.³⁷

The kind of multiple names Litvina and Uspenskii propose is corroborated indirectly by a different naming practice they do not mention but “discovered” by Russell Martin, the inconsistent adoption of “regal” names by royal brides. The only instance from the reign of Ivan IV is the 1575 case of Pelageia Petrovna-Solova, second wife of Tsarevich Ivan, who became Feodosiia upon her marriage.³⁸

Litvina and Uspenskii employ textual and visual evidence very imaginatively to construct their theory, which they present with impressive skill. Their overall theory is not at issue here; we are concerned only with their assertions about Ivan IV. Litvina and Uspenskii convincingly reject Podobedova on Ivan’s possible name Varus. Their own analysis of Ivan’s names Titus and Smaragdus, however, can be contested. Concerning the name Titus one must note that the “Book of Degrees” was written no earlier than the 1560s. Its story of a prophesy which supposedly took place over thirty years earlier, before Ivan’s birth, is very probably a later legend, a fiction designed to laud the now adult and usually considered erudite Ivan. Moreover the sentence itself seems to be metaphoric, like calling a ruler a “New Constantine,” a David or a Solomon. It might not mean that Ivan was *named* Titus. Ivan’s veneration of a saint on whose day he happened to be born does not necessarily prove that Ivan was named for that saint. As Litvina and Uspenskii themselves attest, more than one saint shared Ivan’s birthday. So the textual and visual evidence need not prove their point.³⁹ They are on firmer ground concerning Smaragdus, which is specifically presented as part of Ivan’s name, but they concede the weakness of this unique attribution by admitting that they cannot decide whether it was a name or a nickname. More evidence of what kind of cultural games and puzzles they think the usage of private princely names made possible, especially for the reign of Ivan IV, would be very welcome. Litvina and Uspenskii’s assertion that distinctive public and private spheres existed in sixteenth-century Russian Orthodoxy or at Ivan’s court requires much more elucidation.

Despite Litvina and Uspenskii's contention, shared far too widely, there is no credible evidence that Ivan IV was called Ivan "the Terrible" (*Groznyi*) in his own lifetime or for some time thereafter.⁴⁰ Ironically, about the only thing Fomenko and Nosovskii get even partially right about Ivan IV is that, *pace* Litvina and Uspenskii, he did not carry the epithet "*Groznyi*" during his reign. The most frequently invoked evidence that Ivan carried this name in the sixteenth century is Russian folklore, whose reliability as an indicator of medieval or early modern Russian mentality Fomenko and Nosovskii rightly doubt.⁴¹

Therefore, in his lifetime Ivan was not named Varus, Titus, Smaragdus, or *Groznyi*. Even so, that he had more than one name remains a possibility, depending upon whether "Ivan" in Russian and "Ioann" in Slavonic are considered different names or the same name in different languages and whether Ivan was still alive when he took the cowl and became the monk "Iona." Litvina and Uspenskii's research certainly widens the scope of inquiries into naming culture in early Rus' and Muscovy. Finally, they indirectly raise the fascinating question as to whether in Muscovy different names for the same individual were intended to convey different identities: for monastic names and throne names, self-evidently, but princely names are another matter.

Ivan the Terrible's Alter Egos

Allegory was a fundamental mode of thought of medieval Christianity, East and West, and allegorical interpretation of a literary work would have come naturally to sixteenth-century Russians. Usually literary scholars discuss the use of biblical allegories in sixteenth-century Russian works. Fomenko and Nosovskii as usual turn this approach on its head. According to their perverted, some would say profane, reconstruction of the composition of scripture, the Old Testament stories of Samson, Esther, and Judith were allegories written in the seventeenth century about the reign of Ivan IV.⁴² However, there are also scholarly theories that Ivan had literary alter egos in contemporary Muscovite culture. In these texts Ivan "appears" in the identity of other characters.

"The Tale of Petr and Fevronia"

A great deal was made in Soviet scholarship of the connection between the "Tale of Petr and Fevronia" (*Povest' o Petre i Fevronii*) and the events of Ivan's reign. The text is usually attributed to Ermolai-Erazm (the priest Ermolai who took

the monastic name Erazm), a noted publicist of Ivan's reign and author of a reform project on taxation.⁴³ Manuscripts date from Ivan's reign and some may be tied directly tied to the Tsar's Archive (75–78, 147–74). The text was very popular during the 1550s and 1560s and Ivan did venerate the two saints (67, 118 n. 47). Although the Tale was greatly influenced by folklore, its editor Dmitrieva, shared the common Soviet opinion that the text's antiboyar sentiments connected it to the political and intellectual movements of the first half of Ivan's reign (122–23).⁴⁴ Dmitrieva does not actually say that the text was perceived as an allegory on Ivan and his first wife Anastasiia, but Anastasiia was Ivan's wife during most of the time the Tale was popular. It is hardly likely that Ivan's second wife, the converted Kabardinian Circassian Maria Cherkasskaia, enjoyed acclaim comparable to Anastasiia or Fevroniia. Some contemporaries and some historians blame Cherkasskaia for the *oprichnina* reign of terror and Ivan's ever more debauched lifestyle after his marriage to her in 1561. Therefore in theory Ivan or his contemporaries might have seen Ivan in Petr's guise, a ruler opposed by the boyars over his choice of wife.

The relevant narrative details are picturesque enough. Petr is incurably ill from the spilt blood of the serpent who pretended to be his brother, the ruler of Murom, whom Petr bravely killed. Petr and his entourage go in search for a doctor to cure Petr. A noble (*sinklit*) of Petr's encounters the wise maiden Fevroniia, whose family climbed trees (*drevolaztsy*) and/or (?) were bee-keepers.⁴⁵ Fevroniia promises to cure Petr in return for his hand in marriage. Although Petr objects to her low-born social status he is compelled to agree. After some travails while he tries to avoid keeping his word they are married. Petr became autocrat (*samoderzhets*) in Murom upon the death of his brother. Goaded by their wives the boyars object to Fevroniia for her lack of breeding (*otechestvo*). When the boyars drive Petr and Fevroniia from the city, chaos and civil war ensue. The penitent boyars (*boliiari, vel'mozhi*) invite them back. For her good deeds Fevroniia is beloved of the common people; she can also read men's minds and perform miracles. Petr and Fevroniia both take the cowl, Petr as David, Fevroniia as Evfrosiniia. When Petr sends Fevroniia word he is dying and that she should die at the same time, she asks him to wait while she finishes her embroidery. When she does, at his third request, they die simultaneously and wind up buried in the same place although three times buried separately, love triumphing in death as it did in life. After death they become wonder-working saints.⁴⁶

Some features of this tale seem to "fit" Ivan's reign. According to the Synodal manuscript of the Lebedev Chronicle, a segment of the Illuminated Codex (*Litsevoi svod*) compiled in the 1570s, Prince Nikita Semenovich Lobanov-Rostovskii included among the reasons for his unsuccessful attempt to flee Muscovy to Poland-Lithuania

in 1554 that Ivan did not care for the great clans (*rody*) as proven by his marriage to the daughter of a boyar, making the boyars serve their sister as her slaves (*robny*).⁴⁷ If Lobanov-Rostovskii's vague complaint was directed against Anastasiia then his objection was manifestly misplaced. The Zakhar'ins were a notable gentry clan, but none of its members had risen to boyar status until after they became imperial in-laws. Muscovite tsars beginning with Ivan's father Vasili III habitually took wives from the gentry so as to avoid exacerbating boyar rivalries. To be sure, Anastasiia, like Fevroniia, was beloved of the people. The Nikon Chronicle records that the populace of Moscow attended Anastasiia's funeral with genuine emotion, not because of the charity to be distributed but because she was truly beloved for her philanthropy.⁴⁸ And certainly Ivan, much concerned with the issue of autocratic authority, had much to say about boyar misdeeds and the need for a firm autocratic hand to restrain boyar injustice. According a minor regional prince the title of "autocrat" is a manifest anachronism in the Tale which reflects political theory from Ivan's reign.

However, the disconnect between the two couples, Petr and Fevroniia on the one hand, Ivan and Anastasiia on the other, is far greater than these near coincidences. Anastasiia of course was not a miracle-working, riddle-solving "wise" maiden. Ivan (or someone at court) chose Anastasiia as Ivan's wife, Anastasiia did not propose to Ivan. Ivan mentioned his desire to become a monk several times but he never did. Ivan and Anastasiia had children, Petr and Fevroniia did not. Most important of all, as would have been evident by 1560, Ivan and Anastasiia did not die simultaneously, and Ivan remarried in 1561. Whether Fevroniia's independent, almost dominant role in Petr's marriage matches that of Anastasiia in Ivan's first marriage would be very difficult to confirm, even if Kurbskii and Karamzin, for example, attribute a major role to Anastasiia in restraining Ivan's baser instincts. As much as Ivan revered Anastasiia's memory she was never canonized. Therefore, although there are political elements in the "Tale of Petr and Fevroniia" which were relevant during the 1550s and 1560s, it cannot be said that Petr and Fevroniia's marriage was an allegory of Ivan and Anastasiia's. Petr was not Ivan's alter ego.

"The Tale of Varlaam and Ioasaf"

Zabelin suggested that contemporaries saw the relationship between the hermit Varlaam and the Tsarevich Ioasaf in the "Tale of Varlaam and Ioasaf" (*Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe*) as a reflection of that between the young Ivan and his mentor, the priest Sylvester, an interpretation quoted sympathetically by the text's editor

Lebedeva.⁴⁹ She also mentions without criticism Koretskii's suggestion that Ivan's two divisions of the realm, first into the *oprichnina* and the "land" (*zemshchina*) in 1564–1572, second between "Grand Prince of all Rus'" Simeon Bekbulatovich and Ivan's own appanage (*udel*) in 1575–1576, derive from the literary model of Ioasaf's father.⁵⁰ Unlike the "Tale of Petr and Fevroniia," the "Tale of Varlaam and Ioasaf" (in Western languages Barlaam and Ioasaph) is not an original Russian work but a Russian translation of a Greek tale so popular that it was translated into more than thirty languages. The earliest manuscript is from the fourteenth century; sixteenth-century manuscripts are also extant.⁵¹ The text was sufficiently well known to be included in the Great Menology, a sixteenth-century compendium of ecclesiastical readings compiled by Makarii, archbishop of Novgorod and Pskov and later metropolitan.⁵² Ivan himself quoted the text in his Epistle to the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, and other sixteenth-century authors also cite it. The two saints Varlaam and Ioasaf were included in the restored frescoes of the Golden Palace after the Moscow fire of 1547.⁵³ Kurbskii, Ivan's archenemy, may have worked on or with a translation of the Tale from Latin.⁵⁴ Consequently the text was definitely current in Ivan's Muscovy and enjoyed some resonance.

The narrative explains Koretskii's allusion. The young Indian *Tsarevich* Ioasaf is the son of the anti-Christian ruler Avernir. After an astrologist informs Avernir that Ioasaf will convert to Christianity, Avernir has him raised in an isolated fantasy world. The hermit-monk Varlaam contrives to meet Ioasaf by pretending to be a merchant. Via speeches expounding the Christian faith Varlaam converts Ioasaf. He then leaves Ioasaf against Ioasaf's wishes and refuses to take Ioasaf with him, also against Ioasaf's wishes. After Avernir learns what has happened he has various monks tortured and murdered in his relentless search for Varlaam. Avernir even tries unsuccessfully to have his virginal son seduced from Christianity with sex. Advised by his boyars in council Avernir divides his realm with Ioasaf, who promptly converts his half to Christianity. After Avernir's death Ioasaf abdicates as ruler although his people try to prevent it. After a two-year search he finds Varlaam and becomes a hermit as well. When Varlaam dies he forbids Ioasaf to die with him as Ioasaf wished to do. Eventually Ioasaf's chosen replacement as ruler finds the bodies of both Varlaam and Ioasaf and reburies them in India where miracles occur and the two are canonized.⁵⁵

The parallels between Varlaam and Ioasaf on the one hand and Sylvester and Ivan on the other are superficial and the disparities massive. In the Kurbskii and Karamzin versions of history Sylvester temporarily cured Ivan of his moral turpitude. However, the details of this process and the degree of influence Sylvester exercised

over Ivan have been seriously questioned in recent scholarship.⁵⁶ Sylvester was a married priest with children when he moved to Moscow from Great Novgorod, in other words a very urban individual, not a hermit monk. When he met Ivan, Ivan was an orphan who had been raised in a strife-ridden court bearing no resemblance to a fantasy world, a baptized Christian and a married man. Sylvester could hardly convert Ivan to Christianity! Once Sylvester's influence waned he took the cowl, probably very much in accord with Ivan's wishes, and disappeared. Ivan toyed with the idea of becoming a monk but never did so until he was on his deathbed. He did not divide the realm with his father but with his boyars, and the conversion of either half to Christianity could hardly have been an issue. Ivan never actually abdicated. In 1564 and 1575–1576 his abdications were political ploys. Ivan professed to a potential need for asylum in England only against his wishes. One would hardly compare his projected life in Elizabethan England to that in a desert retreat with only a fellow ascetic for company. The allegorical interpretation of the "Tale of Varlaam and Ioasaf" proposed by Zabelin and endorsed by Lebedeva must be rejected and Koretskii's views of its influence on Ivan's policies discarded. Ioasaf was no more Ivan's alter ego than Petr.

Conclusion: The One and Only Ivan the Terrible

If there was no "Pseudo-Ivan" in the seventeenth century fabricating epistles in Ivan's name; if the most scurrilous foreign accounts by travelers or former *oprichniki* describe the same Ivan as the most obsequious Muscovite chronicle, tale, or sermon; if the propagandistic idealizations of Ivan as a proto-Stalin or a Russian Orthodox saint are discarded, along with equally one-sided and unilluminating psychiatric perorations on Ivan's schizophrenia (including those which present him as oscillating between sanity and insanity depending upon the judgment of a contemporary historian on the morality of his actions); if Ivan was never named Varus or Titus or Smaragdus; if neither Prince Petr of Murom nor Tsarevich Ioasaf of India were Ivan's alter egos; if neither the first Tsarevich Dmitrii, nor Tsarevich Ivan, nor Simeon Bekbulatovich played Ivan the Terrible; if (even allowing for the fact that of course Ivan changed over the course of his reign) the arbitrary division of Ivan's reign into the "good" Ivan and the "bad" Ivan is inconsistent with the evidence of the extant sources, then historians of the reign of Ivan the Terrible are left with the one and only Ivan the Terrible: a complex, complicated, paradoxical, and contradictory personage who was not very good and then very bad but at all times a mixture

of good and evil, whose role-playing expressed different facets of his personality and who employed a variety of literary styles in his writing, whether under his own name or that of pseudonyms, each literary “voice” personifying one of his theatrical personae.⁵⁷ One Ivan the Terrible is more than enough of a challenge for historians to explain; more than one would be superfluous.

Notes

1. Ernesto Ché Guevara, Marxist revolutionary, guerilla and author, was born in Argentina, helped Fidel Castro come to power in Cuba, and died fighting in Bolivia in 1967, said during the Vietnam war that there would be a “bright future should, two, three, many Vietnams flourish throughout the world.” Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara. A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), 719.
2. G. V. Nosovskii and A. T. Fomenko, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo “Faktorial,” 1997), 166–82, Illustration 6, 171; idem, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu (Kakoi seichas vek?)* (Moscow: KRAFT+, LEAN, 1999), 364–72; idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus'.* *Russko-ordynskaia imperiia i Bibliia. Novaia matematicheskaia khronologiiia drevnosti vv. I–II* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo “Faktorial,” 1998), 1: 108–18 [this two-volume work was abbreviated and simplified as idem, *Rus'-Orda na stranitsakh bibleiskikh knig* (Moscow: Anvik, 1998)]; idem, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiiia* (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel'skii dom “Delovoi ekspres,” 1999), 297–356; Anatoly T. Fomenko and Gleb V. Nosovskiy, *History: Fiction or Science? Chronology 4. Russia, Britain, Byzantium, Rome*, tr. Michael Jagger (London: Delamere Publishing, 2007), 237–49.
3. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 1: 460.
4. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 364; idem, *Novaia khronologiiia Rusi*, 169.
5. The first Tsarevich Dmitrii was the son of Ivan IV and Anastasiia; the second Tsarevich Dmitrii, Dmitrii of Uglich, later canonized, was the son of Ivan IV and Mariia Nagaia.
6. S. O. Shmidt, “‘Fenomen Fomenko’ v kontekste izucheniia sovremennogo obshchestvennogo istoricheskogo soznaniia,” in *Anti-istoriia, vychislennaia matematikami. O novoi khronologii Fomenko i Nosovskogo*, ed. S. O. Shmidt (Moscow: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet, 2006), 317.
7. Begunov is a literary specialist (*literaturoved*). Iu. K. Begunov, *Antifomenko. Russkaia istoriia protiv “Novoi khronologii”* (Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2001), 89–102. Begunov's chapter betrays his own suspect knowledge of Ivan's reign. Historians cannot trace Ivan's actions hourly for his entire life, since even his whereabouts are unknown for months at a stretch. The Copenhagen portrait is not contemporary. The first Tsarevich Dmitrii did not drown in 1553 because Tsaritsa Anastasiia slipped on the gangway; Dmitrii was being carried by his nurse. Katyrev-Rostovskii's tale of the Time of Troubles is no longer ascribed to his authorship. Ivan did not lead the Russian troops who took Astrakhan' in 1556. These errors and many more fatally undermine Begunov's critique.
8. Konstantin Sheiko in collaboration with Stephen Brown, *Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past: Anatolii Fomenko and the Rise of alternative history in post-Communist Russia* (Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society, vol. 86; Stuttgart: ibidem, 2009), 213–32. There was no “boyar

bloodbath” during Ivan’s reign; the boyar clans retained their influence. The real Ivan died before the *oprichnina* only if we accept one of Fomenko and Nosovskii’s dates of his death, 1557, but not their equally unjustified alternative, 1589. The assertion that “In reality, Ivan the Terrible has not experienced a particularly bad press in Russia, except for the liberal minority who saw continuity between this tsar and Stalin” overlooks the most dominant negative evaluation of Ivan of the nineteenth century, well before Stalin, namely Karamzin, a conservative, and even “minority” “liberals” like Kostomarov and Kluchevskii did not need Stalin to criticize Ivan. Sheiko’s assertion badly oversimplifies even judgments of Ivan during and after Stalin’s time. It is very doubtful that Anastasiia was poisoned. There are more than a few documents extant from Ivan’s reign, *Izbrannaia Rada* should be translated as “Chosen Council” or “chosen councillors” but not as “Council of Trustees.” The “usual explanation” of Ivan’s second coronation in 1572 is not that Ivan was so insecure that he needed constant reassurance of his status because there is *no* “usual explanation” because there was *no* second coronation. At most Ivan had seven, not eight, wives and the document in which Russian Orthodox Church gave Ivan dispensation to marry for the fourth time, canon law notwithstanding, has survived. Vasilii Blazhennyi cannot have been buried in 1552 in the Trinity–Sergius Monastery on Red Square because the monastery is in Zagorsk. Sheiko omits any discussion of the Judaizer role during Ivan’s reign.

9. For an early statement of these objections see Richard Hellie, “In Search of Ivan the Terrible,” in Sergei Fedorovich Platonov, *Ivan the Terrible*, ed. Joseph L Wieczynski (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1986), ix–xxxiv. For more recent publications see below.

10. R. G. Skrynnikov, *Tsarstvo terrora* (St. Petersburg: Nauka, Sankt-Peterburgskoe otделение, 1992), 203–466.

11. The literature on the historiography of Ivan IV is just as contentious as to the “correct” approach to Ivan’s reign as that historiography itself. From different scholarly eras see G. H. Bolsover, “Ivan the Terrible in Russian Historiography,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 5 (1957): 71–89; Robert O. Crummey, “Ivan the Terrible,” in Samuel H. Baron and Nancy W. Heer, ed., *Windows on the Russian Past: Soviet Historiography Since Stalin* (Columbus, Ohio: American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, 1977), 57–74; Maureen Perrie, *The Cult of Ivan the Terrible in Stalin’s Russia* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England: Palgrave, 2001); and Carolyn Pouncy, “Missed Opportunities and the Search for Ivan the Terrible,” *Kritika* 7, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 309–28.

12. Charles J. Halperin, “Ivan IV’s Insanity,” *Russian History / Histoire russe* 34, nos. 1–4 (2007): 207–18. There is a misquotation on page 212: “mentally depraved” should be “mentally deranged.” My apologies to Isabel de Madariaga for the error.

13. Charles J. Halperin, “Edward Keenan and the Kurbskii-Groznyi Correspondence in Hindsight,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* [hereafter *JbGO*] 46 (1998): 376–403.

14. Cf. G. V. Nosovskii and A. T. Fomenko, *Rekonstruktsiia vseobshchei istorii. Novaia khronologiia* (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel’ tskii dom “Delovoi ekspres,” 1999), 577–78; idem, *Novaia khronologiia Rusi*, 167; idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus’*, 1: 106.

15. Charles J. Halperin, "Would You Believe *Saint Ivan* the Terrible? Reforming the Image of Tsar Ivan IV," *Symposion*, forthcoming.
16. Charles J. Halperin, "A Heretical View of Sixteenth-Century Muscovy: Edward L. Keenan, *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha*," *JbfGO* 22 no. 2 (1974): 172.
17. J. L. I. Fennell, tr., *Prince A. M. Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965). Objections to the authenticity of this text by Edward L. Keenan, Jr., "Putting Kurbskii in His Place, or Observations and Suggestions Concerning the Place of the *History of the Grand Prince of Moscow* in the History of Muscovite Literary Culture," *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte* [hereafter *FOG*] 24 (1978): 131–61, and Brian Boeck, "Eyewitness or False Witness? Two Lives of Metropolitan Filipp of Moscow," *JbfGO* 55, no. 2 (2007): 161–77, are not persuasive. On Keenan see Halperin, "Edward Keenan and the Kurbskii-Groznyi Correspondence in Hindsight," 396–98. Boeck presents no evidence of textual borrowing between the vita of Metropolitan Filipp, written in the 1590s, and Kurbskii's "History" to demonstrate that the latter is secondary and therefore could not have been written by Kurbskii. Boeck infers textual influence from similar sequences of events in narratives structured chronologically. Chronology itself might very well explain these coincidences.
18. I. I. Polosin, "Nemetskii pastor Oderborn i ego pamflet ob Ivane Groznom (1585)," in *Sotsial'no-politicheskaia istoriia Rosiii XVI–nachala XVII v. sbornik statei* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963), 191–217.
19. *Izbornik slavianskikh i russkikh sochinenii i statei vnesennykh v Khronografy russkoi redaktsii*, ed. Andrei Popov (Moscow: Tipografiia A. I. Mamontova, 1869), 182–83.
20. N. M. Karamzin, *Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskago*, vols. 8–9, ed. P. N. Polevoi (St. Petersburg: Izdanie Evgeniia Evdokimova, 1892; The Hague: Mouton, 1969, Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, nos. 189/8, 189/9). His critics include Anthony N. Grobovsky, *The "Chosen Council" of Ivan IV: A Reinterpretation* (Brooklyn: Theo. Graus' Sons, 1969); Antonii N. Grobovskii, *Ivan Groznyi i Sil'vestr (Istoriia odnogo mifa)*, translated from English by Izrail and Irina Rabinovich (London: n. p., 1987); Carolyn Johnston Pouncy, "'The Blessed Sylvester' and the Politics of Invention in Muscovy, 1545–1700," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 19 (1995): 548–72; Aleksandr Il'ich Filiushkin, *Istoriia odnoi mistifikatsii. Ivan Groznyi i "Izbrannaia Rada"* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Voronezhskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta, 1998). Cf. Sergei Bogatyrev, "Micro-Periodization and Dynasticism: Was There a Divide in the Reign of Ivan the Terrible?" *Slavic Review* 69, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 398–409.
21. *Poslaniia Ivana Groznogo*, ed. D. S. Likhachev and Ia. S. Lur'e (Moscow-Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1951), 241–77.
22. D. S. Likhachev, "Kanon i molitva Angelu Groznomu voevode Parfeniia Urodivogo (Ivana Groznogo)," in *Rukopisnoe nasledie drevnei Rusi. Po materialam Pushkinskogo doma*, ed. A. M. Panchenko (Leningrad: Nauka, Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1972), 10–27.

23. Daniil Al' (Daniil Natanovich Al'shits now publishes as Daniil Al'), *Ivan Groznyi: Izvestnyi i neizvestnyi. Ot legend k faktam* (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Doma "Neva," 200), 227–53.
24. Anna Feliksovna Litvina and Fedor Borisovich Uspenskii, *Vybor imeni u russkikh kniazei v X–XVI vv. Dinasticheskaia istoriia skvoz' prizmu antroponimiki* (Moscow: Indrik, 2006), 551–53.
25. Ibid., 180 n. 15, 197, citing Karamzin, *Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskago*, 9: 266 and end-note 741 found on 157–58. In Karamzin's text there are two end-notes 741 in the text but only one in the endnotes. This passage must be an interpolation in a specific manuscript of the "Kazan' History" in Karamzin's possession because the two main redactions of the "Kazan' History" did not cover events through 1582, and this note would seem to be lacking in both major scholarly editions of the text, *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* [hereafter *PSRL*], 43 volumes to date (St. Petersburg: Arkheograficheskaia kommissiia, 1841–2008), vol. 19 (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia I. N. Skorokhodova, 1903), and G. N. Moiseeva, ed. *Kazanskaia istoriia* (Moscow-Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1954).
26. Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imeni u russkikh kniazei*, 537–38 and Excursus 7, "...A priamoe imia emu Uar: dva Dmitriia Ivanovicha v sem'e Ivana Groznogo," 389–96.
27. Karamzin, *Istoriia gosudarstva Rossiiskago*, v. IX, endnote 741, 157–58.
28. O. I. Podobedova, *Moskovskaia shkola zhivopisi pre Ivane IV. Rabota v moskovskom Kreml'e 40-kh–70-kh godov XVI v.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1972), 27 presents evidence that the cult of St. Varus was present in Ivan's Muscovy: Varus appears in the "Church Militant" Icon and Ivan venerated Varus, but this does not constitute proof that Ivan was *named* Varus; Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imen u russkikh kniazei*, 197.
29. *Stepennaia kniga tsarstogo rodosloviia po drevneishim spiskam. Teksty i kommentarii*, 3 vols., ed. N. N. Pokrovskii and G. D. Lenkhoff [Gail Lenhoff], vol. 2, *Stepeni XI–XVII, Prilozheniia. Ukazateli* (Moscow: Iazyki slavianskikh kul'tur, 2008), 345.
30. Liudmila Evgen'eva Morozova and Boris Nikolaevich Morozov, *Ivan Groznyi i ego zheny* (Moscow: Drofa-Plius, 2005), 17, observe that although Ivan was born on the name day of St. Titus, the name Titus was not used in the Moscow grand-princely family.
31. Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imeni u russkikh kniazei*, 203–04.
32. B. M. Kloss, *Izbrannye trudy*, vol. 1, (Moscow: Iazyki russkoi literatury, 1998), 73–85, as cited in David Miller, "Rublev's Old Testament Trinity and the Appearance of the Mother of God to Saint Sergius: Dual Iconographic Signifiers of the Trinity Sergius Monastery in the First Centuries of Its Existence," *Symposion: A Journal of Russian Thought* 7–12 (2002–2007): 56–57. See also Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imen u russkikh kniazei*, 201 n. 92.
33. Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imeni u russkikh kniazei*, 202–03, 218–19.

34. N. N. Rozov, "Pokhval'noe slovo velikomu kniazuiu Vasiliuu III," *Arkheograficheskii ezhegodnik za 1964* (1965): 278–89, here 284 (text), 279 (commentary).
35. Litvina and Uspenskii, *Vybor imeni u russkikh kniazei*, 202 n. 91.
36. Ibid., 179.
37. Ibid., 200.
38. Russell E. Martin, "Gifts for Kith and Kin: Gift Exchanges and Social Integration in Muscovite Royal Weddings," in *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom Revisited: Essays in Russian History in Honor of Robert O. Crummey*, ed. Chester Dunning, Russell Martin and Daniel Rowland (Bloomington, Ind.: Slavica Publishers, 2008), 89.
39. Despite Miller, "Rublev's Old Testament Trinity and the Appearance of the Mother of God to Saint Sergius," 57: "Ivan's baptismal name-saint, the apostle Titus."
40. Cf. Charles J. Halperin, "The Metamorphosis of Ivan IV into Ivan the Terrible," in *Miscellanea Slavica. Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu Borisa Andreevicha Uspenskogo*, ed. F. B. Uspenskii (Moscow: Indrik, 2008): 379–97; and Edward L. Keenan, "How Ivan Became 'Terrible'," in *Rus' Writ Large: Languages, Histories, Cultures. Essays Presented in Honor of Michael S. Flier on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Harvey Goldblatt, Nancy Shields Kollmann, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 28 (2006): 521–42.
41. Nosovskii and Fomenko, *Vvedenie v novuiu khronologiiu*, 366. Folkloric evidence is also rejected by the studies cited in the previous note.
42. Samson: G. V. Nosovskii and A. T. Fomenko, *Rekonstrutsiia vseobshchei istorii. Zhanna d'Ark, Samson i russkaia istoriia. Novaia khronologiia. S prilozheniem "Arki Slavy Imperatora Maksimiliana I" sozdannoi A. Diurerom; i s prilozheniem svodnykh khronologicheskikh tablits dat i imen pravitelei* (Moscow: Finansovyi izdatel'skii dom "Delovoi ekspres", 2002), 87–116; Esther: idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 1: 421–64; Judith: idem, *Bibleiskaia Rus'*, 1: 465–82.
43. *Povest' o Petre i Fevronii*, ed. R. P. Dmitrieva (Leningrad: Nauka, Leningradskoe otделение, 1979), 95–118. Page references to this work will be inserted parenthetically in the text.
44. Western literary specialists do not mention this aspect of the text. See Jack V. Haney, "On the 'Tale of Peter and Fevroniia, Wonderworkers of Murom'," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 131, nos. 1–2 (1979): 139–62; Riccardo Picchio, "The Hagiographic Framing of the Old Russian Tale on Prince Peter of Murom and the Wise Maid Fevroniia," in *Language and Literary Theory: In Honor of Ladislav Matejka*, ed. B. A. Stolz, I. R. Titunik, and L. Dolezd, *Papers in Slavic Philology* 5, *Michigan Slavic Materials* no. 24 (Ann Arbor: Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan, 1984): 489–503; Lyubomira Parpulova Gribble, "Žitie

Petra i Fevroniia: A Love Story or an Apologia of Marriage?" *Russian Language Journal* 49, nos. 162–64 (1995): 91–113; and Priscilla Hunt, "The Tale of Peter and Fevroniia: Icon and Text," *Elementa* 3 (1997): 291–308.

45. Skripil' also describes the family as "poor." *Russkie povesti XV–XVI vekov*, ed. M. O. Skripil' (Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1958), 450, 452. Since Skripil' dated the text to the second half of the fifteenth century he did not draw any analogies to Ivan IV's reign (446–53). Fevroniia is often generically called a "peasant."

46. Text: *Povest' o Petre i Fevronii*, 209–23.

47. *PSRL* vol. 13, part 1 (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 237 n. 5.

48. *Ibid.*, part 2, 327–28.

49. Ivan Zabelin, *Domashnyi byt russkogo naroda v XVI i XVII st.*, vol. 1, *Domashnyi byt' russkikh tsarei v XVI i XVII st.*, part 1, 4th ed. (reprint, Moscow: Iazyki russkoi kul'tury, 2000), 168–75; *Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe. Pamiatnik drevnerusskoi perevodnoi literatury XI–XII vv.*, ed. I. N. Lebedeva (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Nauka, Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1985), 39.

50. V. I. Koretskii, "Zemskii sobor 1575 g. i chastichnoe vozrozhdenie oprichniny," *Voprosy istorii* 1967, no. 5: 38–39, 49; *Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe*, 39. Ivan "abdicated" in 1575, naming as his successor the converted khan of Kasimov, a Muscovite vassal khanate, Simeon Bekbulatovich, Grand Prince of all Rus', while Ivan retained only the title of "Muscovite prince." In 1576 Ivan pensioned Simeon off as Grand Prince of Tver' and resumed the throne himself. Recall that to Fomenko and Nosovskii, Simeon became the fourth Ivan IV.

51. *Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe*, 35–37. Lebedeva is not alone among scholars who do not share the view that this Tale is a Christianized version of the life of the Buddha which originated in India, an issue not germane to our discussion.

52. *Ibid.*, 4, says in the first, Novgorodian edition; David B. Miller, "The Velikie Minei Chetii and the Steppennaia kniga of Metropolitan Makarii and the Origins of Russian National Consciousness," *FOG* 26 (1979): 278, in the second, Moscow edition.

53. *Povest' o Varlaame i Ioasafe*, 38–39.

54. *Ibid.*, 106–09.

55. Text: *ibid.*, 112–267.

56. Grobovskii, *Ivan Groznyi i Sil'vestr (Istoriia odnogo mifa)*; Carolyn Johnston Pouncy, "'The Blessed Sylvester' and the Politics of Invention in Muscovy, 1545–1700"; Filiushkin, *Istoriia odnoi mistifikatsii*. Two nineteenth-century paintings show Ivan and Sylvester together. Pavel Fedorovich Pleshanov (1829–1882), *Ioann Groznyi i ierei Sylvester* is reproduced in Aleksandr

Nechvolodov, *Skazaniia o russkoi zemle*, vol. 2, parts 3 and 4. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo "Tsarskoe delo," 2003; reprinted from Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaia tipografiia, 1913), 381, illustration no. 26. Boris Artem'evich Chorikov (1802–1866), *Ivan Grozni i Sylvestr*, is reproduced in *Ivan Groznyi Entsiklopediia*, M. L. Volpe, ed. (Moscow: ACT Izdatel'stvo, Zebra E, 52007), 49. Both reproductions are small and in black-and-white.

57. D. S. Likhachev, "Litsedeistvo Groznogo. K voprosu o smekhovom stile ego proizvedeniia," in D. S. Likhachev, A. M. Panchenko, and N. V. Ponyrko, ed., *Smekh v drevnei Rusi* (Leningrad: Nauka, Leningradskoe otdelenie, 1984), 25–35.

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